

“To Sleep, Perchance to Dream”: The Middle State of Souls in Patristic and Byzantine Literature

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“Their death is more like dreaming than dying.”
(John of Damascus, *On the Orthodox Faith*, 4.15)

In the Byzantine world, one's location in the social order was largely defined by one's relation to the cosmic order. Coordinating the intimate immensity of the macrocosmic with the microscopic enabled the Byzantines to appropriate and inhabit the cosmos with a culturally sanctioned sense of purpose and direction. Within these orders, living and dying were paradoxically inseparable, and the contemplation of death was recommended as a way of orienting oneself to life, by locating the self, with greater intensity and purpose, within the mystery of existence.¹

This study is concerned with patristic and Byzantine beliefs about the immediate postmortem phase of existence, understood as a liminal, intermediate phase between death and resurrection. Never precisely defined, this para-eschatological state appears as an attenuated, semiconscious mode of existence, of indefinite relation to time and space. It is often a phase of self-discovery, or of being self-discovered, in which one's true character is uncovered and revealed. As a mode of self-confrontation and encounter, it is frequently seen as a form of judgment anticipatory of a future resurrection and a final judgment.

Although heavily indebted to the classical tradition, patristic and Byzantine eschatology necessarily broke new ground, inasmuch as the Greeks had rather different notions of survival, if they can be said to have had any at all. Doubts about immortality appear already in Homer,² as well as in Plato and Aristotle, and, perhaps, Plotinus, who was reluctant to posit a form of the individual, which alone could insure its existence in the

¹See, e.g., John Climacus, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, 6 (“On the remembrance of death”), who notes that “even the Greeks have said as much, describing philosophy as a meditation on death,” alluding to Plato, *Phaedo* (64ab, 67e, 81a) (PG 88:797D); cf. J. A. Fischer, “Μελέτη θανάτου: Eine Skizze zur früheren griechischen Patristik,” in *Wegzeichen*, ed. E. C. Suttner and C. Patock (Würzburg, 1971), 43–54. See also M. Fishbane, “The Imagination of Death in Jewish Spirituality,” in *Death, Ecstasy, and Other Worldly Journeys*, ed. J. J. Collins and M. Fishbane (Albany, N.Y., 1995), 183–208; and P. Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life* (Oxford, 1995), 93–101, 138–39.

²On Homeric psychology, see J. Bremmer, *The Early Greek Concept of Soul* (Princeton, N.J., 1983). Modern study of the soul began with E. Rohde, *Psyche: Seelencult und Unsterblichkeitsglaube der Griechen*, 2 vols. (Freiburg-Leipzig-Tübingen, 1898). Rohde's work was closely allied with contemporary studies in anthropol-

realm of the intelligible.³ Advances in the study of biology and physiology during the Hellenistic period further complexified received opinions about the relation of body and soul,⁴ leaving the Byzantines with a vast and contradictory collection of texts and traditions from which to draw.

In addition to the narrative traditions of ancient myth and the learned discourses of philosophy and medicine, the Byzantines had also to reckon with the popular practices of Greek religion, astrology, and magic, especially after the rise of theurgy in late antiquity.⁵ Motives from this rather different realm of discourse had a significant impact upon patristic and Byzantine eschatology, notably the so-called *Himmelsreise der Seele*, the belief in the soul's ascent through a series of planetary spheres where it is detained and interrogated by hostile cosmic powers. But if Byzantine theorists of the afterlife stood squarely in the tradition of Greek speculative eschatology, they were at the same time intensely critical of that tradition. Above all, it was the biblical doctrine of the resurrection of the body that provoked the greatest disjunction between the respective beliefs of Athens and Jerusalem.⁶

As Tertullian's ever quotable aphorism suggests, Christian Hellenism stood in dialectical tension with Christian Hebraism, and the collision of these two cultural and religious languages created an equivocal, hybrid idiom with its own peculiar grammar and syntax. By the end of late antiquity, the classical canon had become deeply inflected by the Semitic imaginary, and Jewish and Christian scriptures provided the Byzantines with au-

ogy and folklore, and focused on the notion of the soul as an active double of the embodied self that could wander away in dreams and visions. Homer provided him with no examples of such, but Rohde found it in Pindar, frag. 131b (which also notes that, in sleep, the soul "reveals in visions the fateful approach of adversities and delights"). Also in accord with 19th-century interests, Rohde's work was almost exclusively concerned with the immortality and destination of the soul.

³The most comprehensive study of the soul in Plato remains that of T. M. Robinson, *Plato's Psychology*, 2d ed. (Toronto, 1995); for the religious context of Plato's psychology, see W. K. C. Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion: A Study of the Orphic Movement* (Princeton, N.J., 1993); L. R. Farnell, *Greek Hero Cults and Ideas of Immortality* (Oxford, 1921), and D. Lyons, *Gender and Immortality: Heroines in Ancient Greek Myth and Cult* (Princeton, N.J., 1997). For Aristotle, see M. Nussbaum and A. Rorty, eds., *Essays on Aristotle's De Anima* (Oxford, 1992), and R. Sorabji, *Aristotle Transformed: Ancient Commentators and Their Influence* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1990). Plotinus equivocates at *Ennead*, 5.7.1: "Is there an idea of each particular thing? Yes, if I and each one of us have a way of ascent and return to the intelligible, the principle of each of us is there. If Socrates, that is, the soul of Socrates, always exists, there will be an absolute Socrates, in the sense that, in so far as they are soul, individuals are also said to exist in this way in the intelligible world" (Loeb, V [Cambridge, Mass., 1984], 223); cf. H. J. Blumenthal, *Plotinus' Psychology* (The Hague, 1971), and R. Bolton, *Person, Soul, and Identity: A Neoplatonic Account of the Principle of Personality* (London, 1995).

⁴For a helpful survey, see J. Annas, *Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind* (Berkeley, Calif., 1992). It was during the Hellenistic period that the blessed dead, who throughout antiquity had been consigned to a subterranean netherworld, were relocated to the sublunar heavens; cf. F. Cumont, *Afterlife in Roman Paganism* (New York, 1922), 70–90, and A. J. Festugière, *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste*, vols. 3–4 (Paris, 1949–54), who studies Hellenistic religious and philosophical traditions that focused on the desire of the human soul to transcend the cosmos in order to make contact with a hypercosmic God.

⁵On which see E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley, Calif., 1951), 283–311 (= Appendix II: "Theurgy"), and G. Shaw, *Theurgy and the Soul. The Neoplatonism of Iamblichus* (University Park, Pa., 1995); cf. the 11th-century renaissance of Platonic and hermetic studies fostered by Michael Psellos and John Italos (below).

⁶The phrase belongs to Tertullian, *De praescriptione haereticorum*, 7 (ed. A. Kroymann, CSEL 70 [Vienna, 1942], 10), though it should not be taken as unambiguous enthusiasm for "instruction from the porch of Solomon"; cf. idem, *Adversus Iudaeos* (CSEL 70 [1942], 251–331).

thoritative texts that permanently colored their views of the afterlife. The parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man (Luke 16:19–31)⁷ was of particular relevance in this regard, as were passages from the Old Testament and its apocrypha, and it is to a distinctive strand of Jewish apocalyptic piety represented in such texts as 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra that the Byzantine middle state of the soul owes many of its basic features.⁸

If the use of classical myth and philosophy was largely determined by scripture, then scripture itself was but a rough sketch fulfilled in the person of Christ, whose own soul had sojourned famously in Hades. As a result, disparate and unwieldy traditions regarding the fate of the soul after death could be organized by being ordered to the death of Christ as to a universal prototype (cf. Col. 1:18). The exemplary death of Christ was memorialized in liturgy, monumentalized in art, and mimetically reenacted in the passions of the martyrs and in the death-by-asceticism of the saints. Indeed, before the Byzantines developed a coherent theological position on the fate of the soul after death (and it is by no means clear that they did), they had long worshiped one who rose from the dead, and had constructed an elaborate system of devotion to the saints—the living dead—forming a deeply embedded and heavily sedimented repertoire of liturgical traditions that variously shaped eschatological discourse.

Theory, in other words, followed upon practice, and it was gradually acknowledged that the doctrine of the resurrection and the cult of the saints presupposed a rather particular theological anthropology, and (given the macrocosmic character of the human being), a corresponding cosmology and eschatology.⁹ After centuries of reflection and debate, the implications of these devotional and cultic first principles assumed the status of deeply held theological convictions. Not least among them was the belief in the active

⁷In addition to the theme of poverty and riches, patristic and Byzantine exegesis of the Lucan parable was concerned with the memory of sins committed in the body, and with the ability of saintly and sinful souls to recognize each other in the afterlife. See, for example, Justinian's condemnation of Origenism: "If it is true that souls preexist their bodies, they would be conscious of and remember the deeds they wrought before they entered the body, just as they are conscious of and remember them after death, as we shall demonstrate from the words of the Lord in the Gospel of Luke [followed by a verbatim citation of Luke 16:19–28]" (*Ad Menam liber adversus Origenem*, ACO, 3:196, lines 11–17); cf. J. F. Dechow, "The Heresy Charges against Origen," in *Origeniana Quarta* (Innsbruck, 1987), 112–22; M. Alexandre, "L'interprétation de Luc 16.19–31, chez Grégoire de Nysse," in *Epektasis*, ed. J. Fontaine and C. Kannengiesser (Paris, 1972), 425–41.

⁸Both 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra are concerned with situating the souls of the righteous dead in view of an impending, earthly reign of the Messiah. In 2 Baruch, the souls of the dead are kept in the "treasuries of Sheol" (21:23, 24:1), while 4 Ezra speaks of seven chambers in Hades guarded by angels (7:78–101). 1 Enoch 1–36 ("The Book of the Watchers") consigns dead souls to one of three corners in a hollow mountain in the west (22:5). The Wisdom of Solomon encloses the "souls of the righteous in the hand of God" (3:1–2), while 4 Maccabees places them alongside the throne of God (17:18). Wisdom 3:1–9 was read at Byzantine memorials of the martyrs, and illustrated in monumental painting, on which see S. Der Nersessian, "Program and Iconography of the Frescoes of the Parreclesion," in *The Kariye Djami*, ed. P. A. Underwood, vol. 4 (Princeton, N.J., 1975), 305–49, esp. 331–32 ("The Souls of the Righteous in the Hand of God"). Related texts include: 1 Sam. 28:3–25 (the spirit of Samuel and the "witch" of Endor); Job 19:25–26 (immortality and resurrection); Ezech. 37:5–13 (vision of the dry bones); Isa. 26:7–19 (resurrection as national revival); Dan. 12:1–10 (universal resurrection of the dead).

⁹For an early, and formative, example of this connection, see Basil of Caesarea, *Hexaemeron*, 1.4: "It is absolutely necessary that the cosmos should be transformed if our souls are due to be transformed in a different kind of life. Just as the present life has affinities (συγγενῆ) with the nature of this world, so the kind of existence which will apply to our souls tomorrow will have an environment appropriate to their condition" (ed. S. Giet, SC 26 [Paris, 1968], 102).

survival of the saintly soul and the abiding connection of such souls to the scattered fragments of their bodies. The continuity of the earthly and eschatological body was matched by the continuity of memory and consciousness, producing a powerful, living presence that was made available to the Byzantine faithful from within the transcendent time and sacred space of liturgy.

However, despite the inherited apparatus of cult, alternative schools of thought reached rather different conclusions on these matters and contested those of the official church. In virtually every period of Byzantine history, critical voices denied that the souls of the dead could involve themselves in the affairs of the living or intercede on their behalf in heaven. Based on a more unitive, materialist notion of the self as irreducibly embodied, some thinkers argued that the souls of the dead (sainted or otherwise) were largely inert, having lapsed into a state of cognitive oblivion and psychomotor lethargy, a condition sometimes described as a state of “sleep” in which the soul could only “dream” of its future punishment or heavenly reward. Still others argued for the outright death of the soul, which, they claimed, was mortal and perished with the body, and which would be recreated together with the body only on the day of resurrection. Obviously, such views nullified the need for liturgies and memorial offerings for the dead. They also undercut the religious efficacy, social fetishization, and cultural commodification of relics and icons. Needless to say, these rival eschatologies provoked shrill arguments to the contrary from church officials who, among other things, were deeply invested in the lucrative traffic of the sacred.

We may be tempted, therefore, to conclude that the middle state of souls between death and resurrection was more muddle than mystery, and yet the Byzantines were in no great hurry to impose on it anything like systematic definition or closure. To the extent that Byzantine eschatology was rooted in the symbolic representations of liturgy, burial practices, and the mystery of Christ and his saints, any attempt at systematic definition was not only elusive but perhaps undesirable. Nevertheless, Byzantine ambiguity was to have its limits. When the Byzantines encountered the Latin doctrine of purgatory, in cursory fashion at the Council of Lyons (1274), and again more fully at the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438–39), they were forced to articulate their beliefs on the subject (and thus construct their own doctrinal identity), if only in dialectical contrast to the Latins.¹⁰ It is ironic, then, that the Byzantine theology of death and the afterlife attained its consummate expression as a eulogy pronounced over the dying body of Constantine’s ill-fated empire.

EARLY FORMULATIONS

One of the earliest attempts to produce an eschatology with specific attention to the middle state of souls belongs to Irenaeus of Lyons (ca. 130–202), who did so in polemical counterpoint to early Christian chiliasm and Valentinian gnosticism.¹¹ For the Chiliasts, the existence of an intermediate state between death and resurrection was necessary to

¹⁰“They were, those people, a kind of solution,” to quote from Cavafy, *Waiting for the Barbarians*, trans. E. Keeley and P. Sherrard, *C.P. Cavafy: Collected Poems* (Princeton, N.J., 1992), 19.

¹¹The central passage is Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, 5.31–32 (ed. A. Rousseau, SC 153 [Paris, 1969], 389–404). Here I am helped by the work of C. Hill, *Regnum Caelorum. Patterns of Hope in Early Christianity* (Oxford, 1992), 9–18; see also C. Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200–1336* (New York, 1995), 21–58.

accommodate the souls of the righteous as they awaited the establishment on earth of a messianic kingdom lasting a thousand years (cf. Rev. 20:3–7). Their Gnostic opponents, on the other hand, denied the resurrection of the body, along with the need for a temporary place of rest for the soul, which, they believed, proceeded directly to heaven.¹² Irenaeus, while rejecting both the Gnostic denigration of the flesh as well as the chiliastic belief in a resuscitated corpse, nevertheless agreed with the Chiliasts that personhood was inclusive of the body,¹³ and he likewise affirmed the existence of a penultimate state prior to the resurrection. Until then, the souls of the dead reside in an “invisible place allotted to them by God” (*Adv. Haer.* 5.31.2), where they retain the “form” of their physical bodies along with their memories of life on earth (*Adv. Haer.* 2.34.1–2, citing Luke 16.19–31). It is worth noting that, for Irenaeus, the interim state of the soul (as well as the millennium) is a period of training in a larger process of growth in which the righteous gradually become accustomed to life in God.

Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150–215), who wrote a book on Christ the *Pedagogue*, also viewed salvation as a process of growth, understood largely as a system of education. For Clement, the death of the body is a change for the better and marks an advance in the gnostic science of God. After death, souls will be educated by angels in a seminar scheduled to last for a thousand years. Upon completion of their studies, graduating souls are transformed into angels and given teaching responsibilities over incoming freshmen, while their former teachers receive promotion to the rank of archangel.¹⁴ The martyrs, having already taken their advanced degrees through earthly correspondence courses, constitute a class of eschatological élites and are conducted immediately with full tenure into the presence of God. In an opinion that was to gain wide currency, Clement notes that Hades, which was once a receptacle for *all* the dead, has been emptied by Christ and now receives only the souls of sinners.¹⁵ Clement states that these souls also undergo a process of education, although in their case it takes the form of painful purification

¹²Invoking the *exemplum Christi*, Irenaeus notes that, “If these things are as they say, then the Lord himself would have departed on high immediately after his death on the cross.” *Adv. Haer.* 5.31.1 (SC 153 [Paris, 1969], 391); see below, note 40.

¹³The paradigmatic body envisioned by Irenaeus is primarily that of the martyr, whose vindication demands the compensatory glorification of the flesh: “It is only just that in the same creation in which the saints toiled and were afflicted, being tested in every way by suffering, that they should receive the reward of their suffering, and that in the same creation in which they were slain because of their love for God, in that they should be revived again, and that in the creation in which they endured servitude, in that same creation they should reign.” *Adv. Haer.* 5.32.1 (SC 153 [Paris, 1969], 397–99). Cf. Andrew of Caesarea (d. 614): “It is foolish to think that the body will be resurrected divorced from its own members, through which it worked either good or evil, for it is necessary that the members that glorified God should themselves be glorified (cf. 1 Kings 2:30)” (ed. F. Diekamp, *Analecta Patristica* [Rome, 1938], 166).

¹⁴*Eklogai Prophetikai*, 57.1–4; cf. *The Shepherd of Hermas, Visions*, 2.2.6, where the righteous are promised “passage with the angels,” and H. Bietenhard, *Die himmlische Welt im Urchristentum und Spätjudentum* (Tübingen, 1951), 186–88 (“Die himmlische Akademie”). Clement can also speak of such education in terms of “painful purification” and “cultic initiation” (*Strom.* 6.14.109.5; *Prot.* 12.118.4). See also Plato (*Phaedrus*, 248–49; *Republic*, 10.615), who posited a period of 1,000 years between the soul’s various incarnations during which it resides on a star. That the righteous will become angels is denied by the anti-Origenist writer Methodios of Olympus, *De Resurrectione*, 1.51.2; cf. L. G. Patterson, *Methodius of Olympus* (Washington, D.C., 1997), 170–74.

¹⁵*Strom.* 6.6.44.5–47. Marcion had earlier noted that Christ removed from Hades only those who were the enemies of the unjust god of the Old Testament, cited by Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 1.27.3 (SC 264 [Paris, 1979], 350–52). On Clement’s use of Irenaeus, see, L. G. Patterson, “The Divine Became Human: Irenaeus Themes in Clement of Alexandria,” *StP* 31 (1997): 497–516; on the links between martyrdom and gnosticism, see A. van den Hoek, “Clement of Alexandria on Martyrdom,” *StP* 26 (1993): 324–41.

in the flames of a “prudent, discerning (φρόνημ) fire, which penetrates the soul that passes through it.”¹⁶

Much of Clement’s work was developed by his successor Origen (ca. 185–253/54), who was, according to Brian Daley, “the most controversial figure in the development of early Christian eschatology.”¹⁷ Origen was also the most voluminous author of antiquity, allegedly producing some two thousand works, although according to his disciple Pamphilus, even Origen himself never dared to write a treatise on the soul (*Apol.* 8; PG 17:604). The collusion of controversy and prolixity adversely affected Origen’s literary corpus, and his eschatology must be pieced together from the wreckage of fragments, paraphrases, and tendentious translations.

At times, Origen suggests that all souls reside in Hades, which contains places of rest (the “bosom of Abraham”) and places anticipatory of future punishment (*De princ.* 4.3.10). Elsewhere, however, he states that after the death of Christ, the souls of the saints go immediately to paradise (*Hom. in Lk.*, frg. 253; *Dial. Her.* 23). Origen also believes that saintly souls subsist in “luminous bodies” made of “subtle matter” as a kind of vehicle enabling their continued activity and appearances on earth.¹⁸ These souls take an active interest in the affairs of the living (*Comm. in Mt.* 15.35; *Jn.* 13.58 [57] 403), interceding on their behalf at the divine altar and assisting them as they grow in knowledge and wisdom (cf. *Ex. Mart.* 30.38; *Hom. in Num.* 24.1; *Hom. in Cant.* 3; *Hom. in Jos.* 16.5).

Origen also teaches that the souls of the wicked will be punished in the “invisible fires of Gehenna,” although like Clement, he too sees these as having an ultimately corrective and therapeutic function. In fact, Origen believes that, in order to enter paradise, *all* souls must pass through the flaming sword of the cherub that stands guard outside the gates of Eden (cf. *Gen.* 3:24; *1 Cor.* 3:11–15).¹⁹ If the soul has preserved the grace of

¹⁶*Strom.* 7.6.34.4; cf. W. C. van Unnik, “The ‘Wise Fire’ in a Gnostic Eschatological Vision,” in *Kyriakon*, ed. P. Granfield and J. A. Jungmann (Münster, 1970), 277–88. The older study by G. Anrich, “Clemens und Origenes als Begründer der Lehre vom Fegfeuer,” *Theologische Abhandlungen, Festgabe für H. J. Holtzmann* (Tübingen-Leipzig, 1902), 95–120, is still useful; cf. T. Spacil, “La dottrina del purgatorio in Clemente Alessandrino ed Origene,” *Bessarion* 23 (1919): 131–45. See also Plato, *Gorgias*, 34.478, 81.525; *Phaedo*, 62.113d; *Protagoras*, 13.324b; *Laus*, 5.728c; and Vergil, *Aeneid*, 741–42, 745–47.

¹⁷B. Daley, *The Hope of the Early Church: A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology* (Cambridge, 1991), 47.

¹⁸*Contra Celsum*, 2.60, alluding to the “shadowy apparitions” of the *Phaedo*, 81d (trans. H. Chadwick, *Origen, Contra Celsum* [Cambridge, 1986], 112–60). It is significant that these remarks occur in a discussion about the resurrected body of Christ, although that the soul necessarily has a bodily form is also a corollary of Origen’s belief that God alone is incorporeal; cf. M. Simonetti, “Alcune osservazioni sull’interpretazione origeniana di Genesi 2,7 e 3,21,” *Aevum* 36 (1962): 370–81; H. Crouzel, “Le thème platonicien de ‘véhicule de l’âme’ chez Origène,” *Didaskalia* 7 (1977): 225–38; repr. in idem, *Les fins dernières selon Origène* (Hampshire, U.K., 1990), III; E. R. Dodds, *Proclus: The Elements of Theology* (Oxford, 1963), 313–21 (“The Astral Body in Neoplatonism”), and J. J. Finamore, *Iamblichus and the Theory of the Vehicle of the Soul* (Chico, Calif., 1985).

¹⁹L. R. Hennessey, “The Place of Saints and Sinners after Death,” in *Origen of Alexandria. His World and Legacy*, ed. C. Kannengiesser and W. L. Peterson (Notre Dame, Ind., 1988), 295–312. See also H.-J. Horn, “Ignis Aeternis: Une interprétation morale du feu éternel chez Origène,” *REG* 82 (1969), who argues that Origen is dependent on the Stoics, for whom the *pathe* were like a “burning fever” that decomposed the harmony of the soul. See also H. Crouzel, “Lexégèse origénienne de 1 Cor 3.11–15 et la purification eschatologique,” in *Epektasis*, ed. J. Fontaine and C. Kannengiesser (Paris, 1972) 273–83; repr. in idem, *Les fins dernières*, II. Origen’s belief that the fires of Hell would come to an end (i.e., his doctrine of a universal *apokatastasis*) is partly a response to Gnostic charges of a cruel and vindictive God, cf. *Hom. in Lev.* 11.2 (ed. W. A. Baehrens, GCS 29 [Leipzig, 1920], 6, p. 450, line 26).

baptism, its passage through these gates is relatively painless. If not, it undergoes a purgatorial “baptism of fire.”²⁰

In an allegorical interpretation of the Exodus narrative, Origen states that when the soul “sets out from the Egypt of this life” and begins its long journey toward heaven, it will gradually come to understand the “pilgrimage of life, which we understand only dully and darkly so long as the pilgrimage lasts. But when the soul has returned to rest, that is, to the fatherland in paradise, it will be taught more truly and will understand more truly what the meaning of its pilgrimage was” (*Hom. in Num.* 27). After its exodus from the body, the soul will continue to be “educated and molded” by “princes and rulers who govern those of lower rank, and instruct them, and teach them, and train them to divine things.” Having discovered the meaning of life in the body, the soul will in turn learn the various secrets of scripture, the differences among the heavenly powers, the reason for the diversity of creation, the nature of providence, and, “after no small interval of time,” the righteous will ascend from the earthly paradise and embark upon planetary travel, passing through the heavenly spheres, and learn the nature of the stars (*De prin.* 2.11.5–7).

The eschatology of Gregory of Nyssa (ca. 335–394)²¹ marks an important shift away from the highly intellectualist reading of the soul in Clement and Origen toward greater interest in the unity and interdependence of soul and body. In his *De hominis opificio* (written in 379), Gregory stages a confrontation between Plato and Moses, in which he weighs the doctrine of reincarnation against the creation of man described in the book of Genesis. “I cannot,” Gregory says, “be both posterior and anterior to myself” (§29), and he rejects the notion of the soul’s preexistence and transmigration in a succession of different bodies (§28; cf. *De anima* §8). Gregory asserts that the human person is a *union* of mind and body and, in rather Aristotelian terms, argues that it is only in and through the body that the mind can realize itself in its natural finality. Body and soul conspire

²⁰Origen calls baptism the “first resurrection,” while the postmortem passage through the flaming sword he calls a “second resurrection,” or a “baptism by fire,” on which see H. Crouzel, “La ‘première’ et la ‘seconde’ résurrection des hommes d’après Origène,” *Didaskalia* 3 (1973): 3–19; cf. Gregory of Nazianzos, *Oration* 43.70: “Basil escaped the flaming sword, and, as I am well assured, has attained paradise” (PG 36:592A).

²¹On Gregory’s psychology and eschatology, see, G. B. Ladner, “The Philosophical Anthropology of St. Gregory of Nyssa,” *DOP* 12 (1958): 59–94; L. F. Mateo-Seco, “La teología de la muerte en la ‘Oratio Catechetica Magna’ de San Gregorio de Nisa,” *Scripta Theologica* 1.2 (1969): 453–73; idem, “La muerte y su mas alla en el ‘Dialogo sobre el Alma y la Resurreccion’ de Gregorio de Nisa,” *ibid.*, 3.1 (1971): 75–107; M. Alexandre, “Le ‘De Mortuis’ de Grégoire de Nysse,” *StP* 10 (1970): 35–43; J. Cavaernos, “The Relation of Body and Soul in the Thought of Gregory of Nyssa,” in *Gregor von Nyssa und die Philosophie*, ed. H. Dörrie et al. (Leiden, 1976), 61–78; C. Kannengiesser, “Logique et idées mortices dans le recours biblique selon Grégoire de Nysse,” in *ibid.*, 85–103; M. Harl, “La croissance de l’âme selon le *de infantibus* de Grégoire de Nysse,” *VChr* 34 (1980): 237–59; H. Meissner, *Rhetorik und Theologie: Der Dialog Gregors von Nyssa de Anima et Resurrectione* (New York, 1991); C. Roth, “Platonic and Pauline Elements in the Ascent of the Soul in Gregory of Nyssa’s *Dialogue on the Soul and the Resurrection*,” *VChr* 46 (1992): 20–30; R. Williams, “Macrina’s Deathbed Revisited: Gregory of Nyssa on Mind and Passion,” in *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy in Late Antiquity*, ed. L. Wickham et al. (Leiden, 1993), 227–46; E. Peroli, “Gregory of Nyssa and the Neoplatonic Doctrine of the Soul,” *VChr* 51 (1997): 117–39; J. Zachhuber, *Human Nature in Gregory of Nyssa* (Leiden, 2000). For Gregory of Nazianzos, see J.-M. Szymusiak, *Eléments de théologie de l’homme selon saint Grégoire de Nazianze* (Rome, 1963); J. Mossay, *La mort et l’au-delà dans saint Grégoire de Nazianze* (Louvain, 1966); J. M. Mathieu, “Remarques sur l’anthropologie de Grégoire de Nazianze et Porphyre,” *StP* 17.3 (1982): 1115–19. For Basil, see M. Girandi, *Basilio di Cesarea e il culto dei martiri nel IV secolo. Scrittura e tradizione* (Bari, 1990), 165–77 (“Il culto per le reliquie”), and A. d’Alès, “Le Prince du siècle” (below, note 58).

together in the animation of the human, and the soul grows with the body in such a way that the two *together* recapitulate the evolutionary history of the intelligible and material creations.

In a remarkable passage, Gregory suggests that the *imago dei* resides, not within the mind as such, but within the conjunction and interdependence of mind and body. Just as the mind is manifested through a plurality of sensory operations and activities, so too is the divine Trinity itself a single nature that is revealed through a plurality of operations and attributes (§6; cf. *De anima* §2). In advocating a more unitive anthropology, Gregory argues for the profound dependence of the mind on the body. In order both to express itself and to receive impressions from without, the mind must come to its senses (§10), and there can be, he says, no intellectual perception without a material substrate (§14); he dismisses as so much Platonism the idea that the soul can operate independently of a body (§13).²² Consistent with this view, Gregory compares the souls of the dead to the minds of those who are asleep: “In a certain sense, sleep and waking are nothing more than the intertwining of death with life: our senses are dulled in sleep and our awakening brings about the resurrection we long for” (*De mort.*, PG 46.521c).

In his *Dialogue on the Soul and the Resurrection* (written in 380), Gregory stages yet another confrontation between Athens and Jerusalem, casting his dying sister Macrina in the role of biblical exegete, while he himself raises stereotypically Greek objections to the doctrines of immortality and resurrection (§1). After discoursing on the necessity of eternal life for the proper fulfillment of human virtue, Macrina gathers up some of the anthropological threads from the *De hominis opificio*, and argues that the relationship between mind and body is so intimate that, even after death, the soul remains sympathetically linked to the physical remains of its former partner, down to the tiniest atoms and particles (§2). Though tragically severed from the body, the soul continues to exist in a dimension without spatial extension, and can thus abide even with the most widely dispersed of its bodily fragments and somehow remain whole (§2; cf. §6).

Based on an etymological derivation of Hades (ᾍδης) from the word αἰδής, Macrina insists that Hades is not a physical place, but rather a state or condition of the soul (§3).²³ She consequently rejects what she considers to be an outdated cosmology in which Hades

²²Cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *Discourse on the Holy Pascha*: “What is it we call man? Is it both [i.e., body and soul] together, or one of them? Surely it is clear that the conjunction of the two is what gives the living thing its character. . . . There is no division of the soul from the body when it practices theft or commits burglary, nor again does it by itself give bread to the hungry or drink to the thirsty or hasten unhesitatingly to the prison to care for the one afflicted by imprisonment, but for every action the two assist each other and cooperate in the things that are done” (ed. E. Gebhardt, *Gregorii Nysseni Opera* [Leiden, 1967], 9.1, 266–67; trans. S. Hall, in *The Easter Sermons of Gregory of Nyssa*, ed. A. Spira and C. Klock [Cambridge, Mass., 1981], 21). Gregory’s ethical understanding of the relationship between body and soul parallels the virtually universal parable of the “Blind and the Lame,” on which cf. L. Wallach, “The Parable of the Blind and the Lame: A Study in Comparative Literature,” *JBL* 62 (1943): 333–39, and M. Bergman, “The Parable of the Lame and the Blind: Epiphanius’ Quotation from an Apocryphon of Ezekiel,” *JTS* 42 (1991): 125–38.

²³Cf. Methodios, *De resurrectione*, 2.28: ᾍδης . . . παρὰ τὸ αἰδής, διὰ τὸ μὴ ὁρᾶσθαι, καθάπερ ἐλέχθη καὶ Ὁριγένης (ed. G. N. Bonwetsch, GCS 27 [Leipzig, 1917], 385, line 21; PG 18:316b); cf. H. Crouzel, “L’Hadès et la Géhenne selon Origène,” *Gregorianum* 59 (1958): 291–331; repr. in idem, *Les fins dernières*, X. See also, G. L. Prestige, “Hades in the Greek Fathers,” *JTS* 24 (1923): 476–85, a study based on material compiled for G. W. H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1961), p. iii, n. 1; and J. Jeremias, “ᾍδης,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. G. Kittel, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1964), 146–49.

provides the subterranean foundation upon which earth and heaven are respectively stacked.²⁴ Macrina also has much to say about purification after death, which, she says, will be proportionate to one's attachment to the flesh. The "purifying fire" with which all flesh will be salted (cf. Mark 9:49) will be relative to the combustible material—the moral "fuel"—supplied by each soul (cf. 1 Cor. 3:13) (§6–7). To prove her point, she has recourse to the parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man (Luke 16:19–31), as well as to various analogies, including that of a dead body pinned under a house that has collapsed in an earthquake: "Not only are such bodies weighed down by fallen debris, but they are also pierced by spits and stakes which are found in the pile. Whatever these bodies are likely to endure when they are dragged out by their relatives (they will be mangled and torn, lacerated by the debris and the nails, and by the force of those who pull them out)—some such experience I think will happen to the soul, when the power of divine love for mankind draws its own out from the irrational and immaterial debris" (§7).²⁵ In sum, the general direction of Gregory's thought is a movement away from the Platonic dualism of mind and body (evident in his early works) in the direction of a more Christian understanding of the human person as a unitive conjunction of the two. The Greek preference for the intelligible over the sensible is brought into balance by the New Testament belief in the resurrection of the body. The recapitulation of the intelligible and the sensible in the human person—body and soul—constitutes a harmony of opposites, a unification of creation within the human microcosm, in order for the cosmos as a whole to be united to God. The body is no longer that into which the soul is exiled. Instead, exile means being away from the body.

THE MIDDLE STATE OF SOULS: MEMORY AND MIMESIS

The intimate juxtaposition of body and soul and the nature of their relationship after death continued to exercise the imaginations of theologians as well as the patrons of sacred shrines. For all parties, the body was increasingly seen as foundational to the nature of human identity, and corporeal relics and personal objects were granted a critical role in epitomizing the material continuity of the self as it passed from life into death. Fragments of bone and bits of clothing helped to keep alive the memories of the lives that preceded them, although they were more than just medieval *artes moriendi*. In venerating relics, the Byzantines embraced living saints, as well as their own death; each informed the other. The relic of the body was thus deeply marked by the presence of

²⁴Other late antique Greek theologians who deal with the subject of Hades and the afterlife include John Chrysostom (ca. 340–407), *In Lazarum hom.* 1–7 (PG 48:963–1054); Eustratios, *Refutation* (after 582) (ed. L. Allatius [cited below, note 66]); Andrew of Caesarea (563–614), *Curatio*, frag. 1 (ed. F. Diekamp, *Anal-Pat*, 165–66); Andrew of Crete (ca. 660–740), *In vitam humanam et in defunctos* (PG 97:1284D–1292A); Ps.-Athanasios, *Quaestiones ad Antiochum* 16–35, 133–35 (PG 28:607D–617C, 681AD); cf. G. Bardy, "La littérature patristique des 'Quaestiones et Responsiones' sur l'Écriture sainte," *RevBibl* 42 (1933): 328–32; Ps.-Dionysios (6th century), *De ecclesiastica hierarchia*, 7 ("Rites for the Dead") (PG 3:552D–569A); and Anastasios of Sinai (d. after 700), *Quaestiones*, 89–91 (PG 89:716–721C).

²⁵Cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *Concerning those who have died*: "Our irrational attachment to transient beauty, regardless of what it happens to be, causes intense suffering. . . . On the other hand, the pain of death acts as a midwife to another life" (ed. G. Heil, GNO 9.1 [Leiden, 1967], 28, lines 9–10, 47, lines 1–2). For Nyssa's exegesis of the Lucan parable, see M. Alexandre, "L'interprétation de *Luc* 16.19–31 chez Grégoire de Nysse" (above, note 7).

the soul, while the soul, after death, was equally marked by the memory of its life in the body.²⁶

The Byzantines were sensitive to the lack of correspondence between inner states and outer expressions, and they knew that one's outward appearance by no means reveals what goes on within (cf. Matt. 23:27–28). After death, however, the soul was thought to become a mirror of the self, reflecting its inner dispositions and ruling passions. Between the body and the soul, an exchange took place producing, on the one hand, the subjective corporeality of relics and, on the other, like the picture of Dorian Gray, the corporeal subjectivity of the soul. The fluid self acquires, as it were, a material body and appearance as the finite is inserted into infinity. A striking example of this belief can be found in a sermon by Dorotheos of Gaza (b. ca. 506) on the “Fear of the Punishment to Come.”²⁷ According to Dorotheos, the various thoughts and mental images to which the soul is habitually attached in life will constitute its new environment and reality as consciousness is carried over into death. Thoughts and memories will have as much power over the self as they did in life, indeed more so, notes Dorotheos, inasmuch as they can now be avoided through the distractions of the body. After death, however, repressed memories and unfulfilled desires will reaffirm themselves, occurring and recurring with massive force and unmitigated intensity, from which there will be no possibility of escape, for there will be no dispassionate point of reference.

This psychological model is taken in a somewhat different direction by Niketas Stethatos (ca. 1005–90), who is also attentive to the role that memory and consciousness play in the period between death and resurrection. In his treatise *On the Soul* (written ca. 1075),²⁸ Stethatos argues that soul and body are a complex, interactive unity, and that, without the body, the human person is incomplete.²⁹ After sorting out what faculties are proper to the body, what to the soul, and what to the union of the two (§12.64–67),

²⁶Charles Barber has recently noted that there exists no major study of the “function and significance of memory” in the Byzantine world (see his “The Truth in Painting: Iconoclasm and Identity in Early-Medieval Art,” *Speculum* 72.4 [1997]: 1028, n. 32). Similar studies for the medieval West, however, provide important leads. See, e.g., O. G. Oexle, “Memoria und Memorialbild,” in *Memoria. Der geschichtliche Zeugniswert des liturgischen Gedenkens im Mittelalter*, ed. K. Schmid and J. Wallasch (Munich, 1984), 384–440. Oexle attends to how the physically absent (living and dead) were rendered present through the invocation of their names in a liturgical setting, and how liturgy created communities of memory in which the living and the dead could be gathered together. See also M. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1992); M. McLaughlin, *Consorting with Saints: Prayer for the Dead in Early Medieval France* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1994); and B. Gordon and P. Marshall, eds., *The Place of the Dead: Death and Remembrance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2000).

²⁷Dorotheos of Gaza, *Discourse* 12 (ed. L. Regnault, SC 92 [Paris, 1963], 384–88; trans. E. P. Wheeler [Kalamazoo, Mich., 1977], 183–86); the narrative and rhetorical power of this text resists paraphrase; cf. Plato, *Gorgias*, 525.

²⁸J. Darrouzès, ed., *Nicetas Stethatos. Opusculs et lettres*, SC 81 (Paris, 1961), 56–153; cf. D. Tsamis, *Ἡ Τελεῖωσις τοῦ Ἀνθρώπου κατὰ Νικήταν τὸν Σπθῆατον* (Thessalonike, 1971).

²⁹Like Gregory of Nyssa, Stethatos notes that body and soul are a “coexistent and contemporaneous” (συνύπαρκτον, ὁμόχρονον) microcosm, although his chief paradigm for this relationship is the christology of Chalcedon: “God united [in the human being] two natures [i.e., body and soul] in one *hypostasis* without confusion” (§3.14, p. 78, line 9; cf. line 12, where the two natures are said to subsist in “one *prosopon*”). Cf. Symeon the New Theologian, *Second Practical Chapters*, 2.23, 3.62 (ed. J. Darrouzès, SC 51 [Paris, 1957]; trans. P. McGuckin [Kalamazoo, Mich., 1982], 69–70, 96); and *Second Theological Discourse* (ed. J. Darrouzès, SC 122 [Paris, 1966], 136, lines 96–99; trans. P. McGuckin, 126).

Stethatos considers what from among these survives the transition from life to death (§13.68–78). Like “marks on a tablet,” he says, the soul registers the impressions it has received in life, each one tinting the soul’s complexion in one way or another.³⁰ In addition to the indelible etchings of memory that are common to all human souls, the souls of the saints retain various modes of noetic perception and transcendental knowledge,³¹ and after death they find themselves in exalted, heavenly places (*topoi*) constellated according to their distinctive charisms and affections (§70).

Stethatos later indicates that these *topoi* are actually “angelic powers,” or the “shadows cast by angelic wings,” or, in one instance, “the wings of Christ” (§72–73, §79–80).³² Sheltered within these sacred pinions, the saintly soul rests in the hope of future blessings, remembering its former good deeds and sensing the prayers and works of mercy offered on its behalf (§72). Watching over the soul is its guardian angel, who prompts the soul to a remembrance of things past and draws its attention to the good things currently being done for it on earth. Although the saintly soul is “at rest” with respect to the faculties it employed while in the body, its memory becomes clear and focused, and it is vividly conscious of the memorials, liturgies, and feasts held in its honor (§73).³³ Here Stethatos gestures toward the experience of dreams in sleep (§73) as an analogy for the mind’s postmortem preoccupation with its past deeds and future prospects, as well as for its active independence from the passivity of the sleeping (i.e., dead) body. That the context

³⁰This is the result of the soul’s “power of receptivity” (*antileptike dynamis*). Cf. Symeon the New Theologian, *Discourse*, 28.6 (trans. C. J. de Catanzaro, *Classics of Western Spirituality* [New York, 1980], 299). Dorotheos had similarly noted that “the souls of the dead remember everything that happened here—thoughts, words, desires—nothing can be forgotten . . . whatever is in a man here is going to leave the earth with him, and going to be with him there” (trans. Wheeler, 185–86).

³¹Namely, the “knowledge of beings, immanent reason, noetic sensation, and the intuition of intelligibles,” all of which are part of the vocabulary of mysticism and mystical experience; cf. Tsamis, “Ἡ Τελείωσις,” 102–8, 117–37.

³²Stethatos’ placement of departed souls among the angels is partly a response to those who sought to place them in an *earthly* paradise, a problem he addresses in his sequel to *On the Soul* called *On Paradise*, and a concern shared by Philip Monotropos (fl. ca. 1100), *Dioptra*, 4.10 (ed. S. Lauriot, in ‘Ο Ἄθως, vol. 1, pts. 1–2 [Athens, 1919–20], p. 222). For both Stethatos and Monotropos, paradise had been superseded by the kingdom of heaven through the death and resurrection of Christ; cf. M. Chalendar, *Nicetas Stéthatos: Le Paradis spirituel et autres textes annexes* (Paris, 1944); V. Grumel, “Remarques sur la *Dioptra* de Philippe le Solitaire,” *BZ* 44 (1951): 198–211, esp. 208–9 (with additions by W. Hörandner in *Akrothinia* [Vienna, 1964], 23–40); and A. Wenger, “Ciel ou Paradis: Le séjour des âmes, d’après Philippe le Solitaire, *Dioptra*, livre IV, chapitre X,” *BZ* 44 (1951): 560–69. Earlier writers held precisely this view (e.g., Photios, *Amphilochia*, 15.2 [PG 89:715–26]), as did Michael Glykas, *Theological Chapters*, 11 (ed. S. Eustratiades [below, note 36], 1:136–49), largely on the basis of Luke 23:43. Cf. Symeon the New Theologian, *On Penitence*, 9: “When he went down to hell he raised them up from there and restored them, not to paradise whence they had fallen, but to the very heaven of heaven (cf. Ps. 68:34)” (trans. de Catanzaro, 99). On the “wings of Christ” as a symbol of “protective (*skepastikon*) power,” see Ps.-Basil, *Adversus Eunomium*, 5 (PG 29:757D), cited by Theodore of Stoudios, *Antirrheticus*, 2.44 (PG 99:384C; trans. C. Roth, *St. Theodore the Studite, On the Holy Icons* [Crestwood, N.Y., 1981], 71).

³³Or, conversely, outraged at breaches in these rituals; cf. the 11th-century *Apocalypsis Anastasiae*, in which the female Saints Tetrad, Paraskeve, and Kyriake (i.e., Saints Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday) complain to Christ about those who eat meat on Wednesdays and Fridays (days of fasting), or who work, or have sex with their spouses on Sundays (R. Holmberg, ed., *Apocalypsis Anastasiae* [Leipzig, 1903], 12–13). Cf. Eustratios, *Refutation*, 28 (ed. L. Allatius, p. 560, cited below, note 66), who notes that the dead are “conscious” (αἰσθά-voνται) of the memorials offered on their behalf.

for these remarks is the cult of saints and relics seems evident, as when Stethatos further notes that good souls are fragrant, a sensation frequently associated with the mortal remains of holy persons (§79).

The court philosopher Michael Psellos (1018–81) shares many of these concerns, although he discusses them in the terms and categories of Neoplatonic psychology and metaphysics. At death, the harmonics generated by the union of body and soul fall silent, and the soul of the sage begins its ascent into a “dawn beyond light,” being purged of its attachments to the body by the purifying fire of divinity. As the soul is increasingly assimilated to the life of God, its memory of life in the body begins to fade, although Psellos acknowledges that certain souls are entrusted providentially with the care of human beings and with the protection of cities and nations.³⁴

Questions about the survival of memory and consciousness among the departed saints continued to be discussed in the following century, as evidenced in the twenty-first and twenty-second *Theological Chapters* of Michael Glykas (fl. 1150).³⁵ Glykas deftly weaves together dozens of patristic sources, although Sophronios Eustratiades, who edited the *Theological Chapters* nearly a hundred years ago, noted that Glykas derived some of this material from the *synaxarion* of the *Protopsychosabbaton*, a compendious liturgical apology for the efficacy of prayers and memorial offerings for the dead.³⁶ Paraphrasing a passage from Dorotheos of Gaza that is not cited in the *synaxarion*, Glykas states that the thoughts of sinful souls eternally return to the scenes of their crimes, and they can remember only those whom they sinned against, so that murderers, for example, can remember only the faces of their victims.³⁷

In addition to these various psychological and mnemonic models, the Byzantines also developed a view of the afterlife loosely based on the postmortem experiences of Christ, whom scripture proclaimed to be the “firstborn of the dead,” a “second Adam” in solidar-

³⁴Michael Psellos, *De omnifaria doctrina*, 64 (“On the Separation of Body and Soul”), ed. L. G. Westerink (Nijmegen, 1948), 43; *Philosophica minora*, 1.40 (“On Hades”), ed. J. Duffy (Stuttgart-Leipzig, 1992), 144–45; *Philosophica minora*, 2.13, ed. D. J. O’Meara (Stuttgart-Leipzig, 1989), 34–35, 44–45; *ibid.*, 2.20 (“On the Memory of the Soul after Death”), 93–95; *ibid.*, 2.15 (“Against Origen”), 75–76; *ibid.*, 2.16 (“On the Soul”), 76–77; *ibid.*, 2.23 (“On How the Soul Enters and Departs from the Body”), 98–99; *ibid.*, 2.24 (“On the Soul”), 99–100; *ibid.*, 2.27 (“On the Soul”), 102–3; cf. P. Joannou, *Christliche Metaphysik in Byzanz: Die Illuminationslehre des Michael Psellos und Johannes Italos* (Ettal, 1956), 124–39. I am grateful to Stratis Papaioannou for these references.

³⁵This important work has never been studied. See the initial assessment of P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180* (Cambridge, 1993), 366–82, esp. 370–82, who notes that “common to [these chapters] is a preoccupation with the relationship between body and soul, the corruptible and the incorruptible, and death and immortality in human nature. . . . [Glykas’] preoccupation with the creation and corruption of matter, the relationship of body and soul, and the programme of Divine Providence, reflects a concern to define the Orthodox position on matters where it was in danger of being contaminated by dualist heresy and Hellenic philosophy. The Bogomil doctrine of the irredeemable corruption of the physical world, and Neoplatonic ideas of the eternity of matter and metempsychosis . . . undoubtedly contributed to the climate of debate and uncertainty which Glykas reflects.”

³⁶S. Eustratiades, ed., *Εἰς τὰς ἀπορίας τῆς Θείας Γραφῆς Κεφάλαια*, 2 vols. (Athens, 1906; Alexandria, 1912), 1:240 n. 1 (= Eustratiades’ note); *Theological Chapters*, 21–22 = pp. 240–46, 247–57; cf. *Theological Chapters*, 9 (p. 120); for the *synaxarion* notice, cf. *Τριώδιον Κατανυκτικόν* (Athens, n.d.), 22–24. I follow Magdalino (above, n. 35) in translating the title of Glykas’ work as the *Theological Chapters*.

³⁷*Theological Chapters*, 20 (p. 242, lines 6–13); cf. Ps.-Athanasios, *Quaestiones ad Antiochum*, 32: “The souls of the righteous remember us, but not the souls of sinners in Hades, for whom it seems likely that they think only about the punishment that awaits them” (PG 28:616D).

ity with humanity even in his death (cf. Col. 1:18; 1 Cor. 15:20–22). The Byzantine christomimetic tradition was deeply enculturated, and the *exemplum Christi* was a master metaphor according to which the relationship between body and soul in human beings was seen as analogous to that obtaining between humanity and divinity in Christ.³⁸ Christology, in other words, provided an illuminating paradigm for anthropology and stimulated symbolic reflection on the fate of souls after death, a situation that John Meyendorff has aptly characterized as a “christocentric eschatology.”³⁹ Generally speaking, the exemplary death of Christ established a fundamental law of human existence, namely, temporary residence in an interim state until the general resurrection of the dead. Based on Matthew 10:24 (“A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master”), the soul’s tarriance between death and resurrection became a universal *lex mortuorum*, although the souls of the righteous could now endure this experience in solidarity with Christ, to whom they were mimetically linked: “For where I am, you will also be” (John 14:3).⁴⁰

Similarly, the Byzantine practice of conducting memorial services on the third and the fortieth day after death was seen by some as a ritual *imitatio* of Christ’s resurrection on the third day and of his ascension into heaven on the fortieth.⁴¹ However, this was by

³⁸This analogy, popularized by Cyril of Alexandria and turned into a polemical device by Severos of Antioch, came to be seen as inadequate and was eventually rejected; cf. Leontius Scholasticus, *De Sectis* (PG 86:1245A–1249D); Justinian, *Contra Monophysitas* (PG 86:1116–17; trans. K. Wesche [Crestwood, N.Y., 1991], 38–40), and *Confessio rectae fidei* (PG 86:1004C; trans. Wesche, 171–72); and John of Damascus, *De fide orthodoxa*, 33 (ed. B. Kotter, vol. 2 [Berlin, 1973], 2, 113), although later writers continued to make use of it. See also P. Schwanz, *Imago Dei als christologisch-anthropologisches Problem bis Clemens von Alexandrien* (Halle, 1970); R. Norris, “Christological Models in Cyril of Alexandria,” *StP* (1975): 255–68; idem, “The Problem of Human Identity in Patristic Christological Speculation,” *StP* 17.1 (1982): 147–59; P. Stockmeier, “Das anthropologische Modell der Spätantike und die Formel von Chalkedon,” *Annuaire Historiae Conciliorum* 8 (1976): 40–52; K.-H. Uthemann, “Das anthropologische Modell der Hypostatischen Union,” *Kleronomia* 14 (1982): 215–32; F. Gahbauer, *Das anthropologische Modell. Ein Beitrag zur Christologie der frühen Kirche bis Chalcedon* (Würzburg, 1984); and A. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2.2 (Louisville, Ky., 1995), 34–39, 498–500.

³⁹J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology* (New York, 1983), 221.

⁴⁰This idea can be found already in Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, 6.31.2, citing Matt. 10:24 (SC 153, p. 395); cf. Michael Glykas, *Theological Chapters*, 20 (1:245, lines 15–25), citing Andrew of Crete (PG 97:1049–52); and Philip Monotropos, *Dioptra*, 2.11: “If you have heard that souls are in Hades, they are not, as formerly, in pain and torment, but in comfort and rest” (ed. S. Lauriotes [above, note 32], p. 93). Philip cites John 14:3 in this context at *Dioptra*, 4.11 (p. 222); cf. J. Lebourlier, “A propose de l’état de Christ dans la mort,” *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 46 (1962): 629–49; 47 (1963): 161–80. See also Basil of Caesarea, *On the Holy Spirit*, 35: “How can we accomplish the descent into Hades? By imitating through baptism the descent of Christ into the tomb” (ed. B. Pruche [Angers, 1947], 169). The only exceptions to this universal law were Enoch (cf. Gen. 5:24) and Elijah (cf. 2 Kings 2:11–12), who had been bodily translated to heaven prior to their death.

⁴¹Cf. *Apostolic Constitutions*, 8.42.1: “Celebrate the 3rd-day of those who have fallen asleep with psalms and prayers, on account of the one who rose on the 3rd-day” (ed. M. Metzger, SC 336 [Paris, 1987], 258); and Eustratios, *Refutation*, 29 (ed. L. Allatius, pp. 551–52, cited below, note 66), who notes that “the 3rd-day memorial is a *typos* of the 3rd-day resurrection, the 9th of the [postresurrection] appearance of Christ on the 8th-day plus one” [i.e., not counting the day of the resurrection], and the 40th a *typos* of the ascension.” See also Macarius of Alexandria, *Sermo de exitu animae*: “On the 3rd-day after death, Christian souls are summoned to heaven to bow before God in imitation of Christ’s resurrection” (PG 34:389BC); and the study by A. van Lantschot, “Révélations de Macaire et de Marc de Tarmaqa sur le sort de l’âme après la mort,” *Le Muséon* 63 (1950): 178–80. For later writers on this theme, see Philip Monotropos, *Dioptra*, 2.11, 4.8 (ed. S. Lauriotes, p. 94, 220, cited above, note 32); Symeon of Thessalonike (archbp., 1416–29), *De ordine sepulchrae*, 155 (PG 155:688–92); and Joseph Bryennios, *First Sermon on the Last Judgment* (ed. E. Boulgaris, vol. 2 [Leipzig, 1768; repr. Thessalonike, 1990], 300, 304–5).

no means a universally accepted tradition, and others understood these memorials as marking the gradual dissolution of the body in a process that reversed its initial formation in the womb. The human face, for example, was believed to take form on the third day after conception, and therefore said to decompose on the third day after death. At the same time, the gradual decay of the body on the third (and the fortieth) day after death coincided with stages in the soul's formation in the womb of the afterlife. These were critical days for the travail of the soul, during which time the body of the church assembled for corporate prayer. This, in fact, is the tradition followed by the *synaxarion* notice mentioned above.⁴²

The Byzantine iconographic tradition provides further examples of mimetic connections between the death of Christ and that of his followers. In his study of the iconography of the "Man of Sorrows," Hans Belting has noted that the "sleep" of Christ portrayed in these images is "spatially and temporally undetermined," and that the metaphor of "death-sleep" suggests the paradoxical simultaneity of human death and divine life in the one person of Christ. This was also noted by Anna Komnene (1083–1153), who described one of these portraits as an image of the "Bridegroom and Judge" (i.e., suffering humanity and omnipotent divinity) who "sleeps the sweet sleep."⁴³

With respect to the image of the *Anapeson*, Belting notes that the reclining figure of the drowsy Christ Emmanuel is, again, asleep and at the same time awake, a paradox that anticipates the sleep of death in the tomb.⁴⁴ The symbolism is derived from a curious combination of Hebrew scripture and Greek legend. Alluding to the "lion of Judah" in Genesis 49:9, the reclining Christ was said to be "crouching down (*anapeson*), having fallen asleep as a lion" (cf. Gen. 49:9; Rev. 5:5), an animal that was fabled to sleep in its lair with its eyes open. As such, it was seen as an image of Christ, who "did not close the eye of his divinity as he slept in his tomb."⁴⁵ Philip Monotropos (fl. ca. 1100), a contemporary of Anna Komnene, invokes the symbolism of the *Anapeson* in his discussion of Christ's

⁴²The main witness to this tradition is a passage in the *De mensibus* of John Lydos (ca. 490–565), a work dealing with the history of calendars and feasts (ed. R. Wünsch, [Leipzig, 1898], 84–86); cf. the study of G. Dagron, "Troisième, neuvième et quarantième jours dans la tradition byzantine: Temps chrétien et anthropologie," in *Le temps chrétien de la fin de l'antiquité au moyen âge, IIIe–XIIIe siècles* (Paris, 1984), 419–30. Note that the *synaxarion* (cited above, note 36) focuses not on the face, but the heart, which appears on the 3rd day of gestation, solidifies into flesh on the 9th day, and on the 40th assumes full form. On the 9th day after death, the body disintegrates, and the heart alone survives until the 40th day, when it too is dissolved.

⁴³H. Belting, *The Image and Its Public in the Middle Ages. Form and Function of Early Paintings of the Passion*, trans. M. Bartusis and R. Meyer (New York, 1991), 103–4, 118–20; cf. H. Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. E. Jephcott (Chicago, 1994), 270–71.

⁴⁴Belting, *The Image and Its Public*, 104. In the church of Manasija, the *Anapeson* is paired with the image of the "Souls of the Righteous in the Hand of God" (Wis. 3:1; cf. above, note 8) above the tympanum of the western door of the nave, with David and Solomon standing at either side. David's scroll reads: "Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord?" (Ps. 44/43:23), while Solomon's reads: "The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God" (Wis. 3:1); S. Stanojević, *Le monastère de Manasija* (Belgrade, 1928), xvii; cf. A. Xyngopoulos, *Thessalonique et la peinture macédonienne* (Athens, 1955), pl. 18.2. Der Nersessian, "Program and Iconography," 332, notes that this is a "symbolic representation of Christ's messianic mission," but seems to miss the connection between the sleeping Christ and the sleeping souls. Note that David and Solomon also figure prominently in the iconography of the resurrection; cf. A. Kartsonis, *Anastasis. The Making of an Image* (Princeton, N.J., 1986), 186–203.

⁴⁵In the words of Leontios of Constantinople, *On Easter* (cf. *Physiologos*, 5–6), trans. P. Allen with C. Datema, *Leontius Presbyter of Constantinople* (Brisbane, 1991), 112 and n. 59.

descent into Hades, and it eventually entered the hymnology of Christ's ritual burial service on Holy Saturday.⁴⁶

It would seem, then, that based on the example of Christ, the discontinuity of death had become no more permanent than "such stuff as dreams are made of." However, the various similarities between Christ and his human followers paled with respect to one fundamental difference. It was a basic dogma of the early church that, while Christ was born in the "likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8:3), he had nevertheless lived his life on earth without sinning (cf. Heb. 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pet. 2:22; John 8:46; 1 John 3:5). At the time of his voluntary death, therefore, he could not be held accountable to the "one who holds the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14), and on the eve of his passion he announced that the "ruler of this world is coming, and in me he will find nothing" (cf. John 14:30).⁴⁷ The same could hardly be said of his fallible followers (cf. 1 Cor. 1:5, 6:11; Eph. 2:1–3; Col. 3:5–7).

DANGEROUS PASSAGE

If a "Christian end to our lives, painless, without shame, and peaceful" (*Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*) was the ideal for which the church prayed and to which the Byzantines aspired, not all were fortunate enough to attain it. Patristic and Byzantine literature contains harrowing accounts of the soul's experience immediately after its departure from the body, at which time it meets its own conscience by means of graphic encounters with its thoughts, words, and deeds, as its life is critically screened and reviewed.⁴⁸ These encounters often take the form of prosecution by demons in the charged setting of a courtroom, with angels acting as counsels for the defense. At other times, the scene shifts to an aerial "tollgate" (*telonion*) where souls ascending to heaven are detained by passport control and have their moral baggage inspected by demonic customs officials.⁴⁹ The *First*

⁴⁶Cf. Philip Monotropos, *Dioptra*, 2.11 (ed. S. Lauriotes, p. 94, cited above, note 32); and the *lauds* of Holy Saturday matins: "Come and behold today the one from 'Judah who fell asleep,' and let us cry out prophetically to him: 'Crouching down, you slept as a lion. Who shall dare to rouse you, O king?'" Note also that the "sleep" of Adam (during the creation of Eve) typified the "sleep" of Christ on the cross, from whose side emerged the *ekklesia* (Gen 2:21, John 19:34); cf. Methodios, *Symposium*, 2.2–4, 3.8 (PG 18:49–53, 72–73).

⁴⁷Cf. Basil, *Hom.* 11 (on Ps. 7): "The noble athletes of God, who have wrestled with invisible enemies their whole life, after they reach the end of life, are examined by the 'prince of the world.' . . . You may learn this from the Lord himself who said concerning the time of his passion, 'Now the prince of the world is coming, and in me he will have nothing' (John 14:30). He who had committed no sin said that he had nothing" (PG 29:232–33; trans. A. C. Way, *Saint Basil: Exegetic Homilies*, The Fathers of the Church, 46 [Washington, D.C., 1963], 167–68); cited by Michael Glykas, *Theological Chapters*, 20 (ed. Eustratiades, p. 242, lines 15–20, cited above, note 36).

⁴⁸On the whole subject, see C. Zaleski, *Otherworld Journeys. Accounts of Near-Death Experience in Medieval and Modern Times* (New York, 1987); and C. Carozzi, *Le voyage de l'âme dans l'au-delà d'après la littérature: Ve–XIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1994). Sometimes these experiences occur *in corpore* as an agonizing struggle at the deathbed (*psychomachia*), as, for example, in the tale of Stephanos cited by John Climacus, *Ladder*, 7 ("On Mourning") (PG 88:812BD).

⁴⁹See G. Every, "Toll Gates on the Air Way," *EChR* 8 (1976): 139–51; and J. Rivière, "Rôle du démon au jugement particulier chez les pères," *RSR* 4 (1924): 43–64. For the social context, cf. the vivid descriptions in Basil, *Against Usury* (*Hom.* 12, on Ps. 14; PG 29:268–80; trans. FOTC 46, 181–91); and W. R. Farmer, "Who Were the 'Tax Collectors and Sinners' in the Synoptic Tradition?" in *From Faith to Faith* (Pittsburgh, 1979), 167–74; J. Gibson, "Tax Collectors and Prostitutes in First-Century Palestine: Mt. 21.31," *JTS* 32 (1981): 429–33; F. G. Downing, "The Ambiguity of 'the Pharisee and the Toll-Collector' in the Graeco-Roman World of Late Antiquity," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 54 (1992): 80–99; H. Saradi, "The Byzantine Tribunals: Problems

Apocalypse of James (33:2–36.1) combines elements from both and describes a trial held at each person's death by three demons who “demand toll, and take away souls by theft.”⁵⁰

Despite the accretions of Christian morality and Byzantine bureaucracy, these narratives are little changed from ancient beliefs in the planetary spheres as the seats of vicious astral rulers who imprinted their vices on embryos at the moment of birth and hindered the soul's flight to heaven after death. Safe passage was obtained only by imitating the gnostic savior, whose own successful escape became the referential paradigm for the post-mortem experiences of his initiates.⁵¹

It is probably no coincidence that later Christian redactions of these narratives occur primarily in works by monastic writers, and in the *lives* of monastic saints, who understood themselves to be “living like angels” and thus locked in spiritual combat with demons.⁵² At the hour of death, these same forces struggle to claim the departing soul. In Athanasios' *Life of Antony*, for example, the saint has a vision of souls ascending from the earth, as a grotesque giant gnashes its teeth and clutches at those that were “accountable to him.”⁵³ A similar vision in the Bohairic life of Pachomios depicts three angels escorting shimmering souls to heaven on a pure cloth, while dark, sinful souls are torn out by fishhooks and dragged to hell tied to the tail of a “spirit horse.”⁵⁴

in the Application of Justice and State Policy (9th–12th c.),” *REB* (1996): 165–204. For a full-length study, see E. Badian, *Publicans and Sinners: Private Enterprise in the Service of the Roman Republic* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1972; repr. 1983). I am thankful to Susan Holman for many of these references.

⁵⁰Trans. W. Schoedel in *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, ed. J. Robinson (Leiden, 1996), 265–66. Much of the *Apocalypse* is concerned with various formulae (probably related to burial rites) for escaping the celestial toll collectors.

⁵¹On which, see I. Culianu, *Expérience de l'extase: Extase, ascension et récit visionnaire de l'hellénisme au Moyen Âge* (Paris, 1984), rev. and expanded in idem, *Psychoanodia*, vol. 1 (Leiden, 1983); and idem, *Out of This World* (Boston, 1991). See also T. Abusch, “Ascent to the Stars in a Mesopotamian Ritual: Social Experience and Religious Metaphor,” and A. Yarbo Collins, “The Seven Heavens in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses,” both in *Death, Ecstasy, and Other Worldly Journeys*, ed. J. Collins and M. Fishbane (Albany, 1995), 15–39 and 59–93; and S. Johnston, “Rising to the Occasion: Theurgic Ascent in Its Cultural Milieu,” in *Envisioning Magic*, ed. P. Schäfer and H. Kippenberd (Princeton, N.J., 1997), 165–94.

⁵²Zaleski, *Otherworld Journeys*, 167, notes that some of this may be the result of the “sensory deprivation and perceptual isolation” characteristic of the ascetic life, a theme that has been studied in detail by V. MacDermot, *The Cult of the Seer in the Ancient Middle East. A Contribution to Current Research on Hallucinations Drawn from Coptic and Other Texts* (London, 1971). Dorotheos prefaces his discussion of postmortem pangs of conscience with the following: “Do you want me to give you an example to make this clear? Suppose one of us were shut up in a dark cell with no food or drink for three days without sleeping or meeting anyone, or psalmodizing, or praying, and not even thinking of God. You know what his passions would do to him” (trans. Wheeler, 184).

⁵³Athanasios, *The Life of Antony* 65 (ed. G. J. M. Bartelink, SC 400 [Paris, 1994], 304); Athanasios, *On the Psalms* (PG 27:304A); cf. J. Daniélou, “Les démons de l'air dans la vie d'Antoine,” in *Antonius Magnus Eremita* (Rome, 1956), 136–46; M. Alexandre, “A propos du récit de la mort d'Antoine. L'heure de la mort dans la littérature monastique,” in *Le temps chrétien* (as above, note 42), 263–82; and D. Brakke, “Athanasius of Alexandria and the Cult of the Holy Dead,” *StP* 32 (1997):12–18. On the Origenism of Antony's demonology, cf. S. Rubenson, *The Letters of St. Antony: Monasticism and the Making of a Saint* (Minneapolis, 1995), 86–88. See also the fourth *apophthegma* of Theophilus, where demons “accuse our souls as in a lawsuit, bringing before it all the sins it has committed from youth until the time it has been taken away” (PG 65:200B; trans. B. Ward [Kalamazoo, Mich., 1975], 69–70, no. 4). The *Menologion* of Basil II contains an image of Antony watching the soul of Amoun transported to heaven by angels (*Il Menologio di Basilio II* [Turin, 1907], pl. 90).

⁵⁴See *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1 (Kalamazoo, Mich., 1980), 105–9; cf. the first Greek life, 360–61, and F. Cumont, “Les vents et les anges psychopompes,” in idem, *Pisciculi: Studien zur Religion und Kultur des Altertums* (Münster, 1939), 70–75. See also A. Recheis, *Engel, Tod und Seelenreise: Das Wirken der Geister beim Heimgang des Menschen in der Lehre der Alexandrinischen und Kappadokischen Vätern* (Rome, 1958), 169–77.

The eleventh-century *Life of Lazaros Galesiotes* narrates the tale of a sinful layman who in a vision beheld his soul being tried in a courtroom after death, after which he resolved to become a monk. On his way to the monastery, night fell, and as he slept by the side of the road, he was awakened by a figure in the guise of a monk, who led him to a precipice from where he pushed him to his death. This episode was revealed in a dream to the abbot who beheld angels escorting the dead soul to heaven, although demons were also grasping at it, attempting to drag it downward. "Leave him to us," the demons shouted, "for he is ours, and performed our deeds until the hour of his death. You have no grounds to take him, for you have nothing in him" (cf. John 14:30). In defense of their claim, the demons produce a catalogue⁵⁵ of the man's sins arranged under various headings. The angels argue that, on the contrary, the man intended to repent, and his intention was accepted by God. The demons object, arguing that the man "failed to confess [his sins] and did not truly repent." At that point, the litigation is interrupted by a voice from heaven, which rules in favor of the defendant: "His desire to repent, to become a monk, and to cease from his evil ways is verified by his deeds. The fact that he failed to arrive at the monastery where he would have confessed and repented was not his fault, but yours, who hindered him on his way. Therefore, in place of the monastic labors that he would have performed, I accept his blood, which was shed unjustly by you." With that, the demons vanish ("like smoke"), and the angels, rejoicing, carry the soul to heaven.⁵⁶

Origen was among the first to make use of this (originally Egyptian?) tradition and did so on the basis of John 14:30.⁵⁷ Cyril of Alexandria (378–444), like his predecessor Athanasios (d. 373), was also a confederate of the monks of Egypt, and the chief executive officer of a sprawling church bureaucracy. In one of his sermons, Cyril describes the soul's progress through an infernal revenue service staffed by a swarm of "archons, cosmocrats,

⁵⁵The written catalogue of sins is based in part on Col. 2:12–15: "God made you alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, having canceled the bond (*cheirographon*) which stood against us with its legal demands; this he set aside nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the principalities and powers and made a public example of them." In patristic and Byzantine exegesis, this passage was merged with Eph. 2:2 and 6:12: "You were once dead through following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air. . . . For we are not contending against flesh and blood but against principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." See also Jude 9, where the archangel Michael and Satan quarrel over the body of Moses; cf. M. Stone, *Adam's Contract with Satan: The Legend of the Cheirograph of Adam* (Bloomington, Ind., 2001).

⁵⁶Gregory Monachos, *The Life and Conduct of Our Holy Father Lazaros Galesiotes*, 132 (AASS, Nov. 3 [Brussels, 1910], 547–48). The questions posed by the demons in the *life* suggest monastic concern about the problem of incomplete penance, which may explain why this is one of the few such tales in which God himself intervenes in order to pronounce the final sentence. Anastasios of Sinai, *qu.* 83, was less certain about such cases, opining that "God alone knows" (PG 87:709–12). Note the parallel to the prebaptismal rite, itself a kind of courtroom drama with the exorcist as advocate, Satan as accuser, and God as judge; cf. A. Mingana, *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Lord's Prayer and on the Sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist*, Woodbrooke Studies 6 (Cambridge, 1933), 31; H. Kelly, *The Devil at Baptism: Ritual, Theology, and Drama* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1985).

⁵⁷Origen, *Hom. in Luc.*, 23 (PG 13:1862): "When this age is over, and our life is changed for another, we shall find some sitting at the ends of the world to do the business of a toll collector, looking us through with the greatest diligence lest something belonging to him should be found in us. The 'prince of this world' seems to me like a publican, as it is written of him, 'he comes, and has nothing in me'" (John 14:30; cf. above, note 47); cf. *Hom.* 25 (*ibid.*, 1893) and *idem*, *De principiis*, 2.11.6; *Contra Celsum* 6.22–23 and 6.31, which records a list of passwords that the Gnostics believed would grant them passage through the "eternally chained gates of the *archons* after passing through what they call the 'Barrier of evil'" (trans. Chadwick, pp. 347–48). See also the *Acts of Thomas*, 148, 167, and the *Apocalypse of Paul*, 13–18.

teloniarchs, logothetes, and *praktopsephistai*” (fiscal officials of low rank). At the first five of these weigh-stations (*telonia*), each of the bodily senses is closely scrutinized (“from the time of one’s youth until the hour of death”) beginning with sins of the mouth, followed by those of the eyes, the ears, the sense of smell, and touch (PG 77:1073B–1076B; cf. 27:665).

The tradition of the tollgates was firmly established throughout the east long before the end of late antiquity,⁵⁸ although it received typically Byzantine elaboration in the tenth-century *Life of Basil the Younger* (d. 944).⁵⁹ Like a play within a play, the *life* describes the ordeal of a certain Theodora, a pious though not perfect woman, whose soul passes through a series of twenty-two tollgates arranged in three groups of seven, with a final examination for general “inhumanity and hardness of heart.”⁶⁰ The story proved to be quite popular and was known, for instance, to Meletios Galesiotes (ca. 1209–86), who mentions Theodora twice by name in the verses of his *Alphabetalphabetos*.⁶¹

It is worthy of note that Mark Eugenikos (d. 1445), who was undoubtedly familiar with the tradition of the demonic tollgates, failed to mention it in his polemics against purgatory at the Council of Florence (1438–39). The attempted cover-up was soon ex-

⁵⁸For Basil of Caesarea, see A. d’Alès, “Le Prince du siècle, scrutateur des âmes selon saint Basile,” *Recherches de Science religieuse* 23 (1966): 325–28; cf. Macrina’s deathbed prayer: “Let the slanderer (*baskanos*) not stand in my way” (SC 178, p. 224); Ephrem Graecus, *In secundo adventu* (ed. S. Assemani [Rome, 1746], 275–76); John Chrysostom, *Hom. in Mt.*, 54 (PG 58:532); Macarius, *Hom.* 43.9: “like the tax collectors who sit along the narrow streets and snatch at passers-by and extort from them, so also the demons watch carefully and grab hold of souls” (trans. G. Maloney, *Classics of Western Spirituality* [New York, 1992], 155; cf. *Hom.* 22, p. 222); John Climacus, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, 5, on the “impassable water of the spirits of the air” and the “rendering of accounts after death” (PG 88:773AB; trans. C. Luibheid, *Classics of Western Spirituality* [New York, 1982], 126); and *ibid.*, 7, where a dying soul “seems to be rendering account to someone . . . charged with offenses of which he was innocent” (PG 88:812BD; trans. Luibheid, 142); Eustratios, *Refutation*, 27: “The Rich Man died ‘and was buried’ (cf. Luke 16:22), which means that he was unable to pass by the world ruler of darkness and his apostate powers and orders” (cf. Eph. 6:12) (ed. L. Allatius, pp. 537–39; cited below, note 66); Diadochos of Photiki, *On Spiritual Knowledge*, 100: the unrepentant “will not be able freely to pass by the rulers of the nether world” (ed. E. des Places, SC 5 [Paris, 1966]; trans. G. E. H. Palmer et al., *Philokalia*, vol. 1 [London, 1979], 295); Hesychios the Priest, *On Watchfulness and Holiness*, 161: a prayer that “the prince of this world and of the air (cf. John 14:30, Eph. 2:2) will find our misdeeds petty and few” (trans. Palmer, *Philokalia*, 1.190); Theognostos, *On the Practice of the Virtues*, 61: a good soul is greeted at death by an angel and “unharmful by the evil spirits” (trans. Palmer, *Philokalia*, 2.373).

⁵⁹The *vita*, which has a complicated textual tradition, has been edited by S. G. Vilinskii, *Zhitie sv. Vasiliiia novogo v russkoi literature*, vol. 2 (Odessa, 1911); the recension of the *vita* containing the legend of Theodora has been edited by A. N. Veselovskii, “Razyskaniia v oblasti russkogo dukhovnogo stikha,” *Sbornik Otdeleniia russkogo iazyka i slovesnosti Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk* 46 (1889–90); 53 (1891–92); cf. C. Aggelides, ‘O Bîos τοῦ ὁσίου Βασιλείου τοῦ Νέου (Ioannina, 1980), esp. 178–87, which deals with the Theodora narrative. For an extensive paraphrase, see Every, “Toll Gates,” 142–48. See also Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymn* 28 (ed. L. Neyerand, SC 174 [Paris, 1971], p. 310.202–10); and Philip Monotropos, *Dioptra*, 5 (pp. 237–41).

⁶⁰Cf. Basil, *Hom.* 22 (on Ps. 114): “In twenty-one years a man is wont to undergo three variations and vicissitudes of age and life, and in each week (i.e., of seven years) its proper boundary circumscribes the past and displays a visible change . . . the youth imperceptibly disappears, and the old man is transposed into another form, so that life is wont to be filled with many deaths, not only by the passage of time, but by the lapses of the soul through sin” (PG 29:493 AB; trans. FOTC 46, 358). Note the rabbinic tradition in which Job asks not to be judged for the sins he committed before the age of twenty-two, i.e., the age of reasoned adulthood, and the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet.

⁶¹T. Simopoulos, ed., *Μελέτιος ὁ Γαλισιώτης* (Athens, 1978), no. 180 (“On the Remembrance of Death”), p. 492, line 54; Basil the Younger is also mentioned (p. 492, line 71); no. 181 (“On the Separation of the Soul and the Resurrection of the Body”), p. 493, line 19. On Meletios, see R. Macrides, “Saints and Sainthood in the Early Palaiologan Period,” in *The Byzantine Saint*, ed. S. Hackel (Birmingham, U.K., 1981), 81–82.

posed, however, by Eugenikos' disciple, Gennadios Scholarios (ca. 1400–1472) who, in one of his grand gestures toward the West, stated that the trial of the “tollgates” was, in fact, the Byzantine equivalent of purgatory, minus the fireworks.⁶² Indeed, the soul of Theodora was, in the end, spared the ordeal of the tollgates after her spiritual director, St. Basil the Younger, indulged her with a gold coin taken from the coffers of his own merits (§18.8).

Scholarios' intriguing assertion notwithstanding, these narratives were valued more for their power to catalyze religious conversion, as was the iconography of the Last Judgment, which was also considered instrumental in repentance and conversion, prompting in viewers the fear of punishment and damnation.⁶³ The mere thought of rapacious tax collectors and grasping lawyers created great anxiety among the Byzantine populace and, as symbolic devices, were judged effective in fostering a sense of final reckoning and ultimate accountability. The salutary utility of these terrible little tales was not lost on their authors. The *Life of Antony*, for instance, notes that: “Having seen this [i.e., the vision of the ascending soul] . . . [Antony] struggled the more to daily advance,” adding that the saint shared the vision with others “for whom the account would be beneficial, that they might learn that discipline bore good fruit” (§66).⁶⁴

THE SLEEP OF SOULS AND THE CULT OF SAINTS

Unlike the souls of sinners, the souls of the saints, in virtue of their tax-exempt status, were thought to proceed more or less directly either to heaven, or to paradise, or to the bosom of Abraham, or to some such similar place of repose. They were, however, taxed by other problems.⁶⁵ The absence of any official doctrinal pronouncements on the status

⁶²Gennadios Scholarios, *On Purgatory*, 2, ed. L. Petit et al., *Oeuvres complètes de Georges Scholarios*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1928), 533; idem, *On the Fate of the Soul after Death*, 7, *ibid.*, 513; cf., with caution, H. C. Barbour, *The Byzantine Thomism of Gennadios Scholarios* (Vatican City, 1993).

⁶³See *Theophanes Continuatus* (ed. I. Bekker [Bonn, 1838], 164.8–16); cf. R. Stichel, *Studien zum Verhältnis von Text und Bild spät- und nachbyzantinischer Vergänglichkeitsdarstellungen* (Vienna, 1971), 33, 70–75.

⁶⁴SC 400, p. 310; cf. the *psychomachia* in the 4th *apophthegma* of Theophilus, which concludes with: “Where then is the vanity of the world? Where is vain glory? Where is carnal life? Where is pleasure? Where is fantasy? Where is boasting? Riches? Nobility? Father, mother, brother? . . . Since this is so, in what manner ought we not to give ourselves to holy and devout works? What love ought we to acquire? What manner of life? What virtues? What speed? What diligence? What prayer? What prudence? Scripture says, ‘In this waiting, let us make every effort to be found blameless and without reproach in peace’ (cf. 1 Cor. 1:7–8). In this way, we shall be worthy to hear it said: ‘Come, O Blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world’” (PG 65:200D–201A; trans. B. Ward, 70). Cyril of Alexandria, in his *De exitu animi*, poses a series of thirty such rhetorical questions, including: “Where now is the eloquence of rhetors, and their vain and clever tricks?” (!) (PG 77:1077CD). A similar vision in the *life* of Elias Speliotes concludes by asking: “How many tax collectors and publicans await us in our ascent? For at that time there shall be an exacting examination of thoughts, words, and deeds. And who, brethren, shall be found without fault at that hour? Thus we should continuously ponder these things and repeat them, safeguarding ourselves from every sin and vain word” (AASS, Sep. 3 [Paris-Rome, 1868]), 876.

⁶⁵For one thing, the greed of church officials and the popular demand for an unending supply of holy bones threatened to reduce the cult of saints to a Byzantine farce, as can be seen in the satire on relics by Christopher of Mytilene (ca. 1000–1068), who ridicules the “ten hands of the martyr Prokopios, the fifteen jawbones of Theodore, the eight feet of Nestor, the four skulls of George, the five breasts of Barbara, the twelve arms of Demetrios, the twenty skeletons of Panteleimon, and the sixty teeth of Thekla,” complaining that both naive faith and the desire for gain have transformed the martyrs into “beasts with many heads and dogs with many breasts, making Nestor an octopus, and Prokopios a hundred-handed giant [i.e., Aegaeon of Greek mythology].” Christopher’s cabinet of curiosities also contains the “hand of Enoch, the buttock of

of the soul after death encouraged, or at least did not prevent, various factions and parties from contesting, challenging, and in some cases ultimately rejecting the church's devotion to the cult of saints. They did so based on the belief that the souls of the dead (sainted or otherwise) were more or less inert and thus could not intervene in, or be influenced by, the affairs of the living.

Extant are two major responses to these challenges, the first by Eustratios, a sixth-century presbyter of Constantinople,⁶⁶ and the second by John the Deacon,⁶⁷ dated to some time in the eleventh century. Jean Gouillard has suggested that the positions criticized in these two works are a survival of the thnetopsychism encountered by Origen in Arabia, noted by Eusebios in his *Church History*, and listed as a heresy by John of Damascus.⁶⁸ As its name suggests, thnetopsychism was the belief that the soul was mortal and died with the body at the moment of death. It is unclear if Arabian thnetopsychism is related to the Syriac tradition of the soul's dormition espoused by writers like Aphrahat (d. ca. 345), Ephrem (d. 373), and Narsai (d. 502), according to whom the souls of the dead are largely inert, having lapsed into a state of sleep, in which they can only dream of their future reward or punishments.⁶⁹ The Syriac tradition of the soul's "sleep in the dust" (Job 21:26), with its links to the Old Testament and Jewish apocalyptic, stands as

Elijah, and the finger of the archangel Michael," to which he adds a "feather from Gabriel dropped in Nazareth, and a thrice-pupiled eyeball of a Cherubim," *Ad Andream Monachum*, in *Die Gedichte des Christophoros Mitylenaios*, ed. E. Kurtz (Leipzig, 1903), no. 114, pp. 76–80.

⁶⁶Eustratios, Presbyter of Constantinople, *A Refutation of Those Who Say That the Souls of the Dead Are Not Active and Receive No Benefit from the Prayers and Sacrifices Made for Them to God*, in Leo Allatius, ed., *De Utriusque Ecclesiae Occidentalis atque Orientalis Perpetua in Dogmate de Purgatorio Consensu* (Rome, 1655), 336–580. Allatius' Latin translation of this work was reprinted by J.-P. Migne, *Theologiae cursus completus*, vol. 18 (Paris, 1841), 465–514. Eustratios was the disciple of Eutychios of Constantinople, who died in 582, after which, according to J. Gouillard (below, note 67), the *Refutation* was written; cf. N. Constas, "An Apology for the Cult of the Saints in Late Antiquity: Eustratius Presbyter of Constantinople, *De statu animarum post mortem* (CPG 7522)," *JEChrSt* (forthcoming). Compare the earlier reactions of Proklos, *Hom.* 5 (PG 65:716BC); Theodoret, *Curatio*, 8.10 (SC 57 [Paris, 1958], 313); Basil of Seleucia, *Or.* 39 (PG 85:449); and Ps.-Chrysostom, *In s. Thomam* (PG 59:498). A corollary move was to reject the practice of liturgies and memorials for the dead, on which see Ps.-John of Damascus, *De his qui in fide dormierunt* (PG 95:269D).

⁶⁷John the Deacon, *On the Veneration of the Saints. Addressed to Those Who Say That They Are Unable to Help Us after Their Departure from This Life*, text in J. Gouillard, "Léthargie des âmes et culte des saints: Un plaidoyer inédit de Jean Diacre et Maïstôr," *TM* 8 (1981): 171–86; cf. J. Haldon, "Supplementary Essay," in *The Miracles of St. Artemios*, ed. V. S. Crisafulli and J. W. Nesbitt (Leiden, 1997), 45–55; G. Dagron, "Holy Image and Likeness," *DOP* 45 (1991): 32–33; idem, "L'ombre d'un doute: L'hagiographie en question, VIe–XIe siècle," *DOP* 46 (1992): 59–68, esp. 45–47.

⁶⁸John of Damascus, *Haeres.* 90: "Thnetopsychists are those who say that human souls are like the souls of animals, and perish with their bodies" (ed. B. Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol. 4 [Berlin, 1981], 57). Clement had earlier rejected the Greek version of thnetopsychism (cf. Plato, *Phaedo*, 96b4) in *Paed.* 1.6, but Origen notes that Lev. 17:14 had been used to support the theory of two souls, a higher and a lower, the latter present in the blood and subject to bodily desire and death: *Dialogue with Heracleides* (ed. J. Scherer, SC 67 [Paris, 1960], 76–110); cf. Origen, *De princ.* 3.4.2, and the notice by Eusebios, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 6.37 (Loeb, II [Cambridge, Mass., 1980], 90–91).

⁶⁹F. Gavin, "The Sleep of the Soul in the Early Syriac Church," *JAOS* 40 (1920): 103–20, argues that the later tradition of Syriac "soul sleep" was actually Aristotelian, i.e., if the soul is the "form" of the body, then it cannot survive the body's dissolution. But cf. P. Krüger, "Le sommeil des âmes dans l'oeuvre de Narsai," *OrSyr* 4 (1959): 193–210; idem, "Gehenna und Scheol in dem Schriftum unter dem Namen des Isaak von Antiochen," *OKS* 2 (1953): 27–79; E. Beck, "Ephräms Hymnen über das Paradies," *Studia Anselmiana* 26 (1951): 77–95; P. Gignoux, "Les doctrines eschatologiques de Narsai," *Oriens Syriacus* 11 (1966): 321–52, 461–88, and 12 (1967): 23–54; M.-J. Pierre, *Aphraate le Sage Persan. Les exposés*, SC 349 (Paris, 1988), 191–99.

a corrective to overly Hellenized views of the afterlife, and was canonized at a Nestorian synod in the eighth century (786–787) presided over by Timothy I (d. 823), who rejected anything else as blatant Origenism.⁷⁰

Gouillard notes that variations of thnetopsychism and hypnopsychism existed alongside the views of the official church until the sixth century when they were resoundingly denounced by Eustratios. Responding to the charge that the souls of the dead are “incapable of activity” (ἀνεέργητοι, ἄπρακτοι) and “confined to one place” (§2), Eustratios perilously raised the stakes by arguing that, on the contrary, the souls of departed saints are even *more active* in death than they were in life (§14). Eustratios’ opponents further argued that the earthly appearances of saints are merely “phantasms” produced by a “certain divine power” which “assumes their shapes and forms” (§2; §13; §16). But this, Eustratios countered, would make a liar of God and “mislead the faithful as to the true nature of their benefactors.” It would, in more dramatic terms, reduce the church to a “stage of mimes and jesters . . . [or a] theater where actors don the masks of others, like the ‘false faces of hypocrites’ in the Gospel of Matthew” (Matt. 6:16) (§18). Apparently facing the same dilemma, Anastasios of Sinai (d. after 700) sought a compromise and suggested that the earthly appearances of saints are actually angels who take on the forms of various holy people, chiefly to show up in church on the appropriate feast day.⁷¹

Thnetopsychism continued to challenge the patience and ingenuity of church officials, as evidenced by writers such as John the Deacon, Niketas Stethatos, Philip Monotropos (*Dioptra*, pp. 210, 220), and Michael Glykas, all of whom are keenly interested in the survival of consciousness and memory among the souls of the departed saints. John the Deacon, for example, attacks those who “dare to say that praying to the saints is like shouting in the ears of the deaf, as if they had drunk from the mythical waters of Oblivion” (line 174).

The allusion to the Platonic fountain of Lethe (*Rep.* 10.621c) in this passage suggests that the source of trouble may have been connected with the eleventh-century revival of Neoplatonic and Chaldean studies. Stethatos’ contemporary work *On the Soul*, for example, with its concern for the postmortem survival of memory and noetic sensation, contains a marginal note (§74) indicating that the work was written “against the Thnetopsychists.” Jean Darrouzès, who edited this text, claims that this note was added by Stethatos himself after he republished the work as an attack on John Italos (p. 21, n. 3). Gouillard likewise sees the treatise by John the Deacon as yet another volley launched

⁷⁰Similarly, Photios (ca. 810–893) notes that Stephen Gobar (d. 578?) rejected the eschatology of Gregory of Nyssa, and believed that after death the soul stays with its body in the grave (*Bibliotheca cod.* 232; PG 103:1093D–96A). On Timothy I and the synod, see A. Guillaumont, “Sources de la doctrine de Joseph Hazzâyâ,” *Oriens Syriacus* 3 (1958): 3–24; the anti-Origenist remarks occur in the *Lettre de Timothée à Boktišô* (ed. O. Braun, CSCO Scriptorum Syr. vol. 30 [Louvain, 1953], p. 44); cf. O. Braun, “Zwei Synoden des Katholikos Timotheos I,” *OC* 2 (1902): 308–9.

⁷¹Anastasios, *Quaestiones*, 89 (PG 89:718CD); cf. Dagron, “Holy Image,” 32, who calls this a “striking masquerade regulated by God.” The Ps.-Athanasian version of this masquerade (*Qu.* 22; PG 28:612) is rejected as spurious by Glykas, who nevertheless notes that “sometimes they [i.e., the saints] themselves appear to us on their own, at other times, instead of them, angels are sent, and sometimes it is the grace of the Holy Spirit” (*Theological Chapters*, 21, p. 248). Note that not long after Eustratios’ *Refutation*, the Byzantine cult of saints faced a new threat in the form of Iconoclasm, a movement that may have derived some of its impetus from traditions and beliefs such as these; cf. the *Life of Stephen the Younger*, 29, where the Iconoclasts are said to have “blasphemed against the saints and the Theotokos, saying that they are unable to help (*boethein*) us after death,” ed. M.-F. Auzépy, *La vie d’Étienne le Jeune* (Aldershot, 1997), 127, lines 24–26.

against this man, who was, in the words of Anna Komnene, “full of dialectical aggression” (*Alex.* 5.8). Italos, it will be remembered, was born in southern Italy and moved to Constantinople around 1049. His popular lectures on Neoplatonism stirred up considerable commotion resulting in his condemnation by a synod in 1082. Among the various charges brought against him was the crime of believing in the “transmigration of souls and their destruction and reduction to nothingness with the death of the body.”⁷²

Modern commentators have sought to absolve Italos of this charge on the grounds that he could not possibly have espoused Plato’s and Aristotle’s mutually contradictory theories about the fate of the soul after death. However, Byzantine Neoplatonism, much like the late antique variety, was in many ways an attempt to synthesize the academic with the peripatetic.⁷³ In Plotinus and Porphyry, for instance, memory is acquired through the lower soul’s alienation in and through the body, causing the soul to forget the intelligible world and its presence in it. But the higher soul remains impassible, and at death, the lower soul ceases to exist, memory dies, and the intellect returns to God.⁷⁴ The notion that human beings had two souls can be found already in Philo and Origen. Photios was accused of believing in two souls, one that sinned and another that did not.⁷⁵ The tension between the two was precisely what Psellos was trying to resolve.⁷⁶

⁷²See the *synodikon*, ed. J. Gouillard, “Le Synodikon de l’Orthodoxie. Edition et commentaire,” *TM* 2 (1967): 1–316; the quotation is from p. 57/59, lines 193–97, anathematizing those who “prefer the foolish wisdom of secular philosophers, and who follow their teachers, and who accept the transmigration of human souls, or who likewise believe that, like irrational animals, the souls of humans die with their bodies.” See also J. Gouillard, “Le procès officiel de Jean l’Italien. Les actes et leur sous-entendus,” *TM* 9 (1985): 133–74; L. Clucas, *The Trial of John Italos and the Crisis of Intellectual Values in Byzantium in the Eleventh Century* (Munich, 1981), 9–10, 53–54; and R. Browning, “Enlightenment and Repression in Byzantium in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries,” *Past and Present* 69 (1975): 3–23. Italos was further charged with rejecting the cult of saints, and with having thrown a stone at an icon of Christ, although another source notes that the abuse hurled was only verbal (cf. Gouillard, “Synodikon,” p. 59, lines 209–13; and idem, “Le procès officiel,” 155, 157).

⁷³Anna Komnene, *Alex.* 5.9 (ed. L. Schopen, CSHB 39 [Bonn, 1839], 262–63), notes that Italos, after being “promoted to the Chair of General Philosophy, with the title ‘Consul of the Philosophers,’ devoted his energies to the exegesis of Aristotle and Plato.”

⁷⁴For Plotinus, memory is acquired along with individuality and the desire to be different from the One, and thus appears only after the soul has left the higher region of the Intellect (*Ennead*, IV.4.5.11–13). Memory occurs only in time (IV.3.25.13–15). Conversely, the higher, ideal self can participate in Intellect only at a loss of individuality and memory, although in some sense consciousness is maintained (IV.4.2.30–2); cf. G. Gurtler, “Plotinus and the Alienation of the Soul,” in *The Perennial Tradition of Neoplatonism*, ed. J. J. Cleary (Leuven, 1997), 221–34; idem, *Plotinus: The Experience of Unity* (New York, 1988), 59–67 (“Consciousness and Memory”); and C. Steel, *The Changing Self: A Study on the Soul in Later Neoplatonism: Iamblichus, Damascius and Priscianus*, trans. S. Haas (Brussels, 1978).

⁷⁵See Theophanes Continuatus (= Symeon Magister), *Chronographia*, 35: “Photios ascended the pulpit and publicly stated that . . . every human being has two souls: one that sins and another that does not.” Photios is said to have dodged the accusation by means of “cunning arguments” (ed. I. Bekker [Bonn, 1838], 673). See also the tenth charge of the anti-Photian synod of 869: “Even though both the Old and the New Testaments teach that man has only a single rational and logical soul, and though this very same belief is confirmed by all the divine fathers and teachers of the church, there are certain people who nevertheless hold that man has two souls, an opinion that they maintain by means of certain incoherent arguments; these this holy and ecumenical council loudly condemns” (Mansi, vol. 16, p. 404, cf. 456, lines 31–33); cf. F. Dvornik, *The Photian Schism* (Cambridge, 1948), 33.

⁷⁶See esp., Psellos, *Philosophica Minora*, II.20 (“On the Memory of the Soul after Death”), ed. D. J. O’Meara (Stuttgart-Leipzig, 1989), 34–35; cf. O. J. F. Seltz, “Antecedents and Signification of the Term *dipsychos*,” *JBL*

THE PERSISTENCE OF PURGATORY

In the final years of the empire, eschatology became a major topic of discussion between the Greek and Latin churches.⁷⁷ As mentioned above, the notion of the soul's post-mortem purification by fire was not entirely absent from the Greek theological tradition. At the reunion Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438–39), the Latins noted with approval the purgatorial theories of Gregory of Nyssa, to which many a pro-unionist head nodded in agreement. Taking up the gauntlet, Mark Eugenikos, the metropolitan of Ephesos (1392–1445), argued that Nyssa had spoken of such purgations with respect to *all* souls, and not just the souls of the wicked. Moreover, Eugenikos insisted that the purification described by Nyssa was envisioned as taking place, not immediately after death, but only after the Last Judgment, that is, not with the stripping off of the body in death, but with the restoration of the body in the resurrection. In any case, Eugenikos stated, Nyssa, at least on this point, had “missed the mark” (τῆς ἀκριβείας παρασφαλέντος), and he suggested that they use Maximos the Confessor as a basis for reunion instead. Eugenikos, in fact, was being polite. The Latin invocation of highly suspect passages in Gregory of Nyssa appeared, in eastern eyes, to be nothing more than the heretical teaching of Origen, who likewise had envisioned an end to the fires of hell.⁷⁸

As a disciple of Gregory Palamas (1347–59), Eugenikos tended to view all discussion of fire and light in the context of divinization experienced as a vision of the uncreated light of God. From Eugenikos' point of view, Palamism rendered purgatory redundant, and he therefore took the discussion in a new and different direction. For Eugenikos, heaven and hell are names for the relative places produced by the eschatological encounter of created and uncreated energies. Face to face with eternity, the one and the same light of God will both illumine and incinerate, and between those two poles of experience there stands a “great chasm, which none may cross” (cf. Luke 16:26⁷⁹).

The spatialization of divine light was a central point in the theology of Basil of Caesarea, for whom the illuminating presence of the Holy Spirit was the dwelling place of

66 (1947): 211–19; R. Ferwerda, “Two Souls: Origen's and Augustine's Attitude toward the Two Souls Doctrine. Its Place in Greek and Christian Philosophy,” *VChr* 37 (1983): 360–78; G. Stroumsa and P. Fredrikson, “The Two Souls and the Divided Will,” in *Soul, Self, and Body in Religious Experience*, ed. A. Baumgarten, J. Assmann, and G. Stroumsa (Leiden, 1998), 198–217; and G. Stroumsa, “The Two Souls,” in his *Barbarian Philosophy: The Religious Revolution of Early Christianity* (Tübingen, 1999), 282–91.

⁷⁷For a summary of these discussions, see R. Ombres, “Latins and Greeks in Debate over Purgatory, 1230–1439,” *JEH* 35 (1984): 1–14; for the Council of Lyons, see V. Laurent and J. Darrouzès, *Dossier grec de l'Union de Lyon (1273–1277)* (Paris, 1976), 497–501. For the beginnings of the debate, see Michael Glykas, *Theological Chapters*, 85 (p. 580); M. Roncaglia, *Georges Bardanès, métropolitain de Corfou et Barthelemy de l'ordre Franciscain* (Rome, 1953); and G. Dagron, “La perception d'une différence: Les débuts de la ‘querelle du purgatoire’,” in *Actes du XV^e Congrès d'Etudes Byzantines. Athènes, Sept. 1976*, vol. 4 (Athens, 1980), 84–92. For general studies, see R. Ombres, *The Theory of Purgatory* (Dublin-Cork, 1978); J. Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, trans. A. Goldhammer (Chicago, 1984).

⁷⁸Eugenikos, *Oratio altera*, chaps. 15–18 (ed. L. Petit, PO 15.1 [Paris, 1920; repr. Turnhout, Belgium, 1974], pp. 122–28); the quotation critical of Nyssa is from chap. 15 (p. 122, lines 28–29); on Maximos the Confessor, see chap. 18 (p. 82), citing Maximos, *Quaestiones et Dubia*, 13 (PG 90:796); for Eng. trans. and commentary, see P. Sherwood, *The Earlier Ambigua of St. Maximus the Confessor* (Rome, 1955), 215–19.

⁷⁹Eugenikos cites the Lucan parable in *Oratio prima*, chap. 14, no. 7 (PO 15, p. 58, lines 12–28); *Oratio altera*, chap. 4 (PO 15, p. 111, lines 20–30), and chap. 23, no. 7 (p. 147, lines 9–22).

the sanctified.⁸⁰ The elision of space with light was also a philosophical presupposition of Neoplatonic metaphysics,⁸¹ and while Eugenikos cites Dionysios the Areopagite directly, he found John of Damascus' discussion of spatiality particularly valuable. According to the Damascene, "the 'place' (*topos*) of God is the 'place' where God's energy is present . . . it is that which participates in God's energy and grace."⁸² With the theology of Gregory Palamas, the late antique metaphysics of light received new vigor and expression, and it remained for Mark Eugenikos to extend that theology into the eschaton. For Eugenikos, the souls of the righteous dwell in the Spirit as in a kind of light-space, which they occupy and experience as pure vision (*theoria*), like figures shimmering in the gold ground of an icon, "sages," as it were, "standing in God's holy fire."⁸³

The vision of God, according to Eugenikos, is unique to each soul and modifies spatial orientation by establishing particular modes of reference and relation.⁸⁴ In one compelling image, he suggests that the souls of the righteous are like the friends of a king who have received invitations to a royal banquet. They move toward God with joy, beholding the palace looming on the horizon and contemplating with delight the hour of celebration.⁸⁵ Eugenikos cites a similar passage from Gregory of Nazianzos who describes the soul as "graciously advancing forward (*ἵλεως χωρεῖ*) to God."⁸⁶

⁸⁰Basil's second doxology, which he defended against criticism, used the locative preposition "in" (*ἐν*) as a way to characterize the Spirit's function within the economy of creation and redemption; see his *On the Holy Spirit*, chaps. 25–26 (58–64), ed. B. Pruche (Angers, 1947), 219–31; cf. M. A. Donovan, "The Spirit: Place of the Sanctified in Basil's *De Spiritu Sanctu*," *StP* 17.3 (1982): 1073–84. See also H. Alfeyev, "The Patristic Background of St. Symeon the New Theologian's Doctrine of the Divine Light," *StP* 32 (1997): 231–38.

⁸¹On which see L. Schrenk, "Proclus on Space as Light," *Ancient Philosophy* 9 (1989): 87–94; cf. W. Beierwaltes, "Plotins Metaphysik des Lichtes," *Zeitschrift für Philosophische Forschung* 5 (1961): 334–62, repr. in *Die Philosophie des Neuplatonismus*, ed. C. Zintzen (Darmstadt, 1971), 75–115, with a *Nachwort* at 116–17; and F. Schroeder, *Form and Transformation: A Study in the Philosophy of Plotinus* (Montreal, 1992), 24–39.

⁸²Cited by Eugenikos, *Responsio*, chap. 2 (PO 15, p. 153, lines 21–24). The Areopagitical citations (*Celestial Hierarchy*, 15, and *On the Divine Names*, 1.4) are at *ibid.*, p. 155, lines 15–27, and p. 156, lines 19–30.

⁸³Eugenikos has a rich vocabulary for the middle state of souls that have reposed "in faith." Such souls reside in "appropriate places (*προσῆκοντες τόποι*) and are entirely at rest." They are "free in heaven with the angels and near (*παρὰ*) to God himself, indeed they are in paradise from whence Adam fell" (*Or. alt.* chap. 3, p. 110, lines 5–9). Eugenikos notes that these souls enjoy the "blessed vision (*θεωρία*) of God and of God's effulgence (*αἴγλη*)" (*ibid.*, lines 15–17). In a citation from Gregory of Nazianzos, the righteous are described as receiving the "ineffable light (*ἄφραστον φῶς*) and the vision (*θεωρία*) of the holy and sovereign Trinity, shining more brightly and purely" (*ibid.*, chap. 9, p. 116, lines 29–31 = Nazianzos, PG 35.945). This state can be called the "vision (*θεωρία*) of God, or participation and communion (*μετοχή καὶ κοινωνία*) with God, or the kingdom of heaven," *Responsio*, chap. 1 (p. 153, lines 15–17).

⁸⁴*Oratio altera*, chap. 23, no. 4 (p. 144, lines 24–30): "The most perfect reward for the pure of heart and soul is to see God, although all do not see God in the same way" (*τούτου δὲ οὐχ ὁμοίως ἐπιτυγχάνειν ἅπαντας*); cf. *Argumenta decem adversus ignem purgatorium*, no. 1 (ed. L. Petit, PO 17 [Paris, 1920], p. 285, lines 12–14): *τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ δοκεῖ πολλὰς μὲν ἐν τῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ τιθεμένη θεωρία, τάξεων τε καὶ βαθμῶν εἰσαγωγή διαφορότητα*, see also Scholarios' last words to Mark: *ἀποδημήσεις πρὸς ὃν ἡτοίμασας σεαυτῷ τόπον τῆς ἀναπαύσεως* (PO 17, p. 352, lines 19–21).

⁸⁵*Oratio altera*, chap. 4 (p. 111, lines 9–13), citing Ps.-Athanasios, *Quaestiones ad Antiochum*, 20 (PG 28:609).

⁸⁶*Oratio altera*, chap. 7 (p. 115, line 12 = Nazianzos, *Or.* 7, PG 35:781). At rest and yet paradoxically in motion, the notion of the soul's "stationary movement" is a spatial construal of the patristic doctrine of "sober inebriation" and "watchful sleep." See, e.g., Maximos the Confessor, *Thal.* 50: "The soul, established by God on account of the natural unity in which it has come to exist, will acquire an ever-moving rest and a stationary uniformity of motion around the same, one, and only thing eternally" (PG 90:760A); cf. P. Plass, "'Moving Rest' in Maximus the Confessor," *ClMed* 35 (1984): 177–90; P. Blowers, "Gregory of Nyssa, Max-

The metaphor of movement, however, indicates that the souls of the righteous, despite their state of bliss, are nevertheless incomplete. These souls are merely on their way to the palace—they have not yet arrived at the banquet. Their “share (κλήρον) in the joy of the kingdom,” therefore, remains only “partial (μερική απόλαυσις) and incomplete (οὐ τελεία).”⁸⁷ Their imperfection, moreover, is not, in this case, a corollary to the theory of the soul’s perpetual progress in God. Rather, Eugenikos says that such souls are “incomplete and, as it were, cut in half (ἀτελείς ὄντες καὶ οἷον ἡμίτομοι), because they lack the incorruptible body that they will receive after the resurrection.”⁸⁸

The disembodied soul had by this time been long understood to be but one piece of a psychosomatic puzzle apart from which it could not know perfection. Even after death, Eugenikos asserted, the soul continues to be drawn to (ἐπιχωριάζειν) the proximity of its body in language reminiscent of its sympathy and attraction toward God.⁸⁹ Body and soul, being in this way identified, can be said to occupy the same space, intersecting at the site of their holy relics, which become sacred places of passage and encounter. Relics are thus conjunctive centers in which absolute space becomes identified with a particular place, coextensive with the physical space of the church building. As a result, the *loca sanctorum* have a complex, symbiotic relationship with the souls and bodies of their heavenly patrons. On the one hand, the saints are present in their temples as patrons and benefactors listening attentively and interceding (πρεσβεύειν) on behalf of their clients.⁹⁰ The church, on the other hand, through prayer, *anamnesis*, and especially through the eucharistic *anaphora*, can assist (βοηθεῖν), not just the departed faithful, but even the righteous in their eternal response to the divine call.⁹¹

But while the presence of the saints sanctifies the space of the liturgy, the very materiality of that space means that the saints present therein cannot at the same time be completely present with God in heaven. Indeed, Eugenikos notes, even angels cannot be in two places at once:

Angels are sent by God from their spiritual place (τόπος) into the bodily world, and they are not simultaneously present or active (ἐνεργεῖν) both here and there. While present

imus the Confessor, and the Concept of ‘Perpetual Progress’,” *VChr* 46 (1992): 151–71; and L. P. Gerson, *Kinesis Akinetos. A Study of Spiritual Motion in the Philosophy of Proclus* (Leiden, 1973).

⁸⁷*Oratio altera*, chap. 3 (p. 109, line 35; p. 111, line 7), and chap. 6 (p. 114, lines 29–30); cf. *Responsio*, chap. 1 (p. 152, lines 11–19): “The souls of the saints have not yet (οὐπω) received their proper inheritance (οἰκεῖον κλήρον), and their enjoyment (ἀπόλαυσις) of that blessed state (κατάστασις) is entirely incomplete and lacking (ἀτελής ἐστὶ πᾶσα καὶ ἐλλιπής) with respect to that restoration (ἀποκατάστασις) for which they hope.”

⁸⁸*Oratio altera*, chap. 6 (p. 114, lines 33–36); cf. the *Acta Graeca* (ed. J. Gill, Concilium Florentinum. Documenta et Scriptores 5.1 [Rome, 1953], pp. 25–26): “The souls of the righteous experience the vision of God perfectly (τελείως) as souls, but they will experience it more perfectly (τελεώτερον) after the resurrection of their own bodies, and then they will shine forth like the sun, or indeed like the very light which came forth from our Lord Jesus Christ on Mount Tabor” (cf. Matt. 17:1–2).

⁸⁹*Oratio altera*, chap. 3 (p. 110, lines. 10–15). Mark develops this position in his treatise *On the Resurrection*, published by A. Schmemmann, *Θεολογία* 22 (1951): 53–60, see esp. p. 57, lines 137–39: καὶ μαρτυροῦσιν αἱ τῶν ἁγίων ψυχαί, τοῖς ἰδίοις σκήνεσιν ἐπιχωριάζουσι μετὰ τελευτὴν καὶ δι’ αὐτῶν ἐνεργοῦσι.

⁹⁰*Oratio altera*, chap. 3 (p. 110, line 13). On the cult of the saints in the Palaiologan period, see A.-M. Talbot, *Faith Healing in Late Byzantium* (Brookline, Mass., 1983), and eadem, “New Wine in Old Bottles: The Rewriting of Saints’ Lives in the Palaeologan Period,” in *The Twilight of Byzantium*, ed. S. Ćurčić and D. Mouriki (Princeton, N.J., 1991), 15–26.

⁹¹*Oratio prima*, chap. 1 (pp. 39–41), chap. 3 (pp. 43–44); *Oratio altera*, chap. 12 (pp. 118–19).

there, they perform (ἐνεργεῖν) their proper tasks of standing before God, beholding God, and praising God. But when present on earth they refrain for a time (σκολάζοντες πρὸς μικρόν) from their pure (ἀκραιφνής) vision of God. John of Damascus, in his chapter on the *Place of God*, says that, “Although an angel is not contained physically in a place so as to assume form and shape, it is said to be in a place because of its being spiritually present and active (ἐνεργεῖν) there according to its nature, and because of its being nowhere else, but remaining spiritually circumscribed in the place where it acts. For it cannot act in different places at the same time.”⁹² . . . For the same reason the vision and enjoyment of the saints is incomplete (ἐλλιπής) since, taking thought for their brethren, they are turned (ἐπιστρέφονται) toward the physical world and spend most of their time with us, working miracles through their sacred relics and being present to each one who prays to them. It is not possible for them to be active (ἐνεργεῖν) and sympathetically present (συμπάσχειν) with the faithful and at the same time to enjoy the pure (ἀκραιφνής) vision of God.⁹³

The soul’s presence in the fragments of its body conditions and limits its presence to God. Although productive of a new mode of spatiality, it remains lodged within the space and time of the fallen world. Nevertheless, it lives with the sure “promise,” or “pledge” (ἄρραβών)⁹⁴ of a perfect eschatological union with God. Until then, its proper mode of orientation is one of “expectation” (προσδοκία), in which it “expects the resurrection of the dead” in solidarity with the entire body of the church.⁹⁵

Sinful space, on the other hand, is of an entirely different order. It is devoid of light. It is a dark interval, isolated, confining, and stressful.⁹⁶ Such space is occupied, and thereby produced, by the isolated soul in conjunction with its opaque, corrupted body. These souls also look to the future (προσδοκῶντες), but in fear and loathing of the coming judgment. Closed within inert and inactive space, like the souls immobilized in Dante’s frozen lake of Hell, they can make no movement or gesture toward God, but anxiously await

⁹²A corollary notion was that “each angel has under it a different part of the earth or the universe,” according to Gregory of Nazianzos, *Or.* 28.31 (SC 250 [Paris, 1978], 174, lines 29–31); cf. idem, *Or.* 31.29: “The Holy Spirit penetrates (χωροῦν) them (i.e., the angels) simultaneously, though they are distributed in various places, which shows that the Spirit is not tied down by spatial limitations (ἀπερίγραπτον)” (ibid., p. 336, lines 40–44); idem, *On Rational Natures* (ed. C. Moreschini and D. A. Sykes, *St. Gregory Nazianzus: Poemata Arcana* [Oxford, 1997], 26–32 [text and trans.], 195–214 [notes and commentary]); cf. J. Rousse, “Les anges et leur ministère selon Grégoire de Nazianze,” *Mélanges de sciences religieuses* 22 (1965): 133–52; T. Špidlík, *Grégoire de Nazianze* (Rome, 1971), 15–23. The visual and hence artistic circumscription of angels was debated during the iconoclastic controversy, on which see K. Parry, *Depicting the Word. Byzantine Iconophile Thought of the Eighth and Ninth Centuries* (Leiden, 1996), 81–88.

⁹³*Responsio*, chap. 2 (p. 154, lines 10–26, and p. 156, lines 6–17); cf. *On the Resurrection*, 1 (A. Schemmann, *Θεολογία* 52 [1951]: 54.42–43): ἄγγελοι περιγραπτοὶ καὶ ἄλλοτε ἄλλους τόπους ἐπιλαμβάνοντες εἰς διακονίαν ἀποστελλόμενοι.

⁹⁴*Responsio*, chap. 1 (p. 153, line 10).

⁹⁵Eugenikos’ doctrine of eschatological “expectation” is derived from the eleventh article of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan creed (προσδοκῶ ἀνάστασιν νεκρῶν) and is attested at *Oratio prima*, chap. 1 (p. 40, line 15 = προσδοκία); *Oratio altera*, chap. 3 (p. 110, line 25 = προσδοκῶντες); chap. 8 (p. 116, line 18 = προσδοκία); chap. 11 (p. 118, line 2 = προσδοκῶντες); *Responsio*, chap. 6 (p. 163, line 3 = προσδοκία), and *On the Resurrection*, 1 (*Θεολογία* 52 [1951]: 53.5–6 = προσεδόκων).

⁹⁶Eugenikos notes that the souls of “sinners are locked in Hades, in what David calls ‘dark places and in the shadow of Death, laid within the lowest pit’ (Ps. 87:7), while Job calls it a ‘land of darkness and gloominess, a land of perpetual darkness where there is no light, neither can any one see the life of mortals’ (Job 10:22)”; *Oratio altera*, chap. 3 (p. 110, lines 18–24), drawing on Ps.-Athanasios, *Quaestiones ad Antiochum*, 19 (PG 28:609).

the “tyranny of the light.”⁹⁷ These the church also prays for, so that they may find “some relief, if not complete deliverance” (μικρῶς τινοῦς ἀνέσεως, εἰ καὶ μὴ τελείας ἀπαλλαγῆς).⁹⁸

Between these shadows and the light there can be no middle ground. In death, as in life, the soul can stand only on either side of a “great chasm which none may cross” (Luke 16:26). There can thus be no purgatorial “third place” (τρίτος τόπος)⁹⁹ because there can be no middling, intermediate relationship with God (cf. Matt. 12:30; Rev. 3:15–16). Neither is it possible, Eugenikos argued, for souls to suffer “physically” from any kind of “material or bodily fire,”¹⁰⁰ nor would such suffering somehow balance the ledger of divine debts. Eugenikos maintained that the Latin theory of satisfaction imposed human limits and logic on divine love and implied that God could forgive great sins but not small ones which must be punished. Citing the case of the “good thief” transported to Paradise (Luke 23:43), and the Publican who “went to his house justified” (Luke 18:14), Eugenikos held that God’s love and forgiveness are absolute. Even the emperors themselves, he noted, do not punish wrongdoers after granting them amnesty. If sin is forgiven, punishment is not required since God’s justice and holiness do not “demand” punishment in order to be “satisfied.”¹⁰¹ A “third place,” Eugenikos concluded, could be only an allegorical place, segmented from the real space and time (καιρός) of the final judgment,¹⁰² and as such represents only the didactic or proleptic production of “expectant,” prophetic space.¹⁰³

Above all, there can be no purgatory because the full and final epiphany of deified humanity must await the resurrection of the transfigured body. The “kingdom is prepared, it has not yet been given (ἡτοιμασμένη οὐ δεδομένη); the fires, too, have been

⁹⁷Unlike the sainted souls hastening to the royal banquet, Eugenikos describes the souls of sinners as “bound within the confines of a prison, like persons who stand accused, and who await in anguish the arrival of the judge and the impending punishments”; *Oratio altera*, chap. 4 (p. 111, lines, 14–15).

⁹⁸*Oratio altera*, chap. 12 (p. 118, lines 30–31).

⁹⁹*Oratio altera*, chap. 23, no. 7 (p. 147, lines 13–15): μὴ ἐμφαίνεσθαι τρίτον τινὰ τόπον, τὸν τὰς τῶν μέσως βιωσάντων ψυχὰς καθαρθησομένης ὑποδεχόμενον, cf. *Oratio prima*, chap. 5, p. 46, lines 13–18: τοὺς κρινομένους εἰς δύο μοῖρας διελθόντων . . . οὐδαμοῦ καὶ τρίτους παρέδειξε, citing Matt. 25:46. Eugenikos did not misrepresent his tradition on this point, but cf. the *Testament of Abraham*, trans. E. P. Sanders in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. J. H. Charlesworth, vol. 1 (New York, 1983), 889–91, where a soul is “set in the middle” between the damned and the saved but later taken to paradise through the intercession of Abraham (cf. Gen 18:22, 33). For the plight of a similar soul, and its rescue by a local holy man in the 7th century, cf. F. Halkin, “La vision de Kaioumos et le sort éternel de Philentolos Olympiou,” *AB* 63 (1945): 56–64, and C. P. Kyrris, “The Admission of the Souls of Immoral but Humane People into the ‘Limbus Puerorum’ according to the Cypriot Abbot Kaioumos,” *RESEE* 9 (1971): 461–77.

¹⁰⁰*Oratio altera*, chap. 11 (p. 118, lines 12–13): πῦρ δὲ σωματικὸν ἀσωμάτων ψυχὰς κολάζειν τε καὶ καθαίρειν, οὗτ’ ἂν εἴπομεν ὅλως; cf. *ibid.*, chap. 23, no. 8 (pp. 148–49).

¹⁰¹*Oratio altera*, chap. 19 (pp. 130–33), and chap. 23, no. 1 (pp. 140–41).

¹⁰²*Oratio altera*, chap. 5 (p. 112, lines 14–15) citing Matt. 8:29: “What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come to torment us before the time (πρὸ καιροῦ)?”

¹⁰³Eugenikos, employing the technical terms of patristic exegesis, notes that the “visions and revelations” (ὀπτασίαι καὶ ἀποκαλύψεις) that some saints beheld of souls in torment are “shadows and outlines of future events” (σκιαγραφαὶ τινὲς τῶν μελλόντων καὶ διατυπώσεις), such as the vision of Daniel 7:9; cf. *Oratio altera*, chap. 10 (p. 117, lines 6–17). Such fire can only be allegorical (ἀλληγορικῶς) (*ibid.*, chap. 11 [p. 118, line 16]), or “economic” (οἰκονομικῶς), that is, uttered at a particular time for the spiritual edification of a particular audience (πρὸς χρεῖαν τινὰ τοῦ τότε καιροῦ καὶ τῶν ἀκουόντων ὠφέλειαν) (*ibid.*, lines 16–18; cf. *ibid.*, chap. 23, no. 10 [pp. 150–51]).

prepared, but they are not yet occupied.”¹⁰⁴ The soul without the body is not the self nor can it be judged as such. The place where the body is absent cannot be identified with the self, and to suggest that souls can experience the fullness of heaven or hell before the resurrection is to suggest that the body adds little or nothing to human personhood and the experience of divinization.¹⁰⁵

According to Eugenikos, “neither the soul by itself, nor the body by itself is deserving of the name human being, but only both together.”¹⁰⁶ And though body and soul constitute one single form, God can both divide them in death and unite them in the resurrection, just as God divided the single form of the primal light of creation to dwell in the body of the sun (citing Gen. 1:3–5, 14–19).¹⁰⁷ Mark develops this analogy when he suggests that, “You are in awe at the beauty of the sun, and you admire the beautiful form of the body—imagine then the two of them coming together: the brightness of the sun and the symmetry and shape of the body by which all beauty is measured. And what would you wonder at more, a fixed, spherical form (σφαίροειδής), or the form of the human body with its parts beautifully fashioned and arranged? This is the sun which David called a ‘Bridegroom’ and a ‘Giant’” (Ps. 18:6).¹⁰⁸ At the resurrection of the dead, the scattered fragments of body and soul will be gathered and united, and the corporeal plenitude of humanity will assemble for the dawning of a day without end. Then a river of fire will roar forth from the throne of Christ (cf. Dan. 7:9–10): “Unto the just it will appear as light, and unto sinners as a fire more searing than any physical pain, which is why David said, ‘The voice of the Lord divides the flame of fire’ (Ps. 28:7), and this division shall happen because those bodies upon which that fire shall alight are infernal and opaque, which distinguishes them from the bodies of the saints.”¹⁰⁹

The saints, on the other hand, will shine like “gold tried in the furnace (Wisd. 3:6),”¹¹⁰ and the familiar functions of the body will be glorified and wondrously transfigured.

¹⁰⁴*Oratio altera*, chap. 5 (p. 112, lines 3–4), in the context of an exegesis of the judgment parable in Matt. 25:41.

¹⁰⁵See Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body*, 279–317.

¹⁰⁶*Oratio altera*, p. 55, lines 71–72.

¹⁰⁷*Ibid.*, p. 55, lines 80–86; cf. Basil, *Hexaemeron*, 6 (cited below, note 109); cf. John Chrysostom, *Hom. 25 in Jo.*: “The old man was created on the sixth day, but the new one on the first, that is, on the same day as the light” (PG 59:150, lines 31–32).

¹⁰⁸*Oratio altera*, p. 58, lines 180–91. The entire psalm verse states: “In the sun he has set his tabernacle; and he comes forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber: he will exult as a giant to run his course.” Cf. Clement, *Ekl. Proph.* 56.4, 57.3 (the “tabernacle of the sun” = the “abode of the commanding angel,” or “God himself”); and Gregory of Nazianzos, *Or.* 28.29 (SC 250 [Paris, 1978], 166–68, lines 16–22, 1–6). The “spherical form” is a slur on Origen; cf. H. Chadwick, “Origen, Celsus, and the Resurrection of the Body,” *HTR* 41 (1948): 83–102; A. M. Festugière, “Le corps glorieux ‘sphéroïde’ chez Origène,” *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 43 (1959): 81–86; J. Bauer, “Corpora Orbiculata,” *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie* 82 (1960): 333–41; and Patterson, *Methodius*, 178–79 (“The Spherical Body of the Resurrection”).

¹⁰⁹*Oratio altera*, p. 59, lines 223–28; cf. Basil, *Hexaemeron*, 6: “Do not tell me that it is impossible for these [i.e., light and the solar body] to be separated (cf. Gen. 1:3–5, 14–19) . . . this, too, the Psalmist testifies when he says, ‘The voice of the Lord divides the flame of fire’ (Ps. 28:7). Whence also in the requital for the actions of our lives a certain mysterious saying teaches us that the nature of fire will be divided, and the light will be assigned for the pleasure of the just, but also for the painful burning of those punished” (SC 26 [Paris, 1968], 336–38).

¹¹⁰*Oratio prima*, chap. 5 (p. 46, line 29).

Our eyes will see and we will understand both ourselves and the beauty of God. In place of all food, "I will be filled when I see your glory" (Ps. 16:15). The ears will receive the divine voice with joy, as it is said, "Make me to hear joy and gladness" (Ps. 50:10). We will taste with our lips that the "Lord is good" (Ps. 33:9), and we shall inhale the fragrance of the "Spiritual Myrrh" which "poured itself out for us" (cf. Phil. 4:18; Eph. 5:2). Though the tongue shall cease from its natural work, there will nonetheless resound the "song of those making festival and the sound of joy in the tents of the just" (Ps. 41:51; Ps. 117:15). And together with the curious disciple we shall touch the Word made flesh (cf. John 20:21; 1 John 1:1), and we shall know his wounds, and the reasons for his incarnation and passion. And the stomach, when it accepts the nourishment of the Word, shall give birth. For the body will become entirely spiritual, and its members will be spiritual and the foci of spiritual energies, and thus have its proper use.¹¹¹

Until then, Eugenikos concluded, "'Faith' will rule over the present world, and 'Hope' over the period between death and resurrection, but 'Love' will reign after the final judgment, and through it the saints will be united to God."¹¹²

CONCLUSION

Most religious traditions have maintained a keen interest in the ultimate destiny of the human person, and to this general rule Byzantine Christianity was no exception. With its attention to the relationship between body and soul, and with its concern for their fate after death and their longed-for reunion in the resurrection, Byzantine eschatology was primarily a transcendental fulfillment of anthropology. That is, the Byzantines believed that only in the clarifying light of the eschaton would the authentically and abidingly human appear in definitive relief and resolution. From this point of view, eschatology and anthropology are so closely interlaced that, in the words of one modern theologian, eschatology *is* anthropology conjugated in the future tense.¹¹³ However, and despite the obvious importance of these themes, the nature of the human and its fate after death were never authoritatively defined or formalized by an ecumenical council, nor were they ever the subjects per se of systematic theological inquiry. Thus throughout the Byzantine world one finds an assortment of eschatologies strewn somewhat carelessly about. Gershom Scholem's remarks about a similar situation in rabbinic Judaism are worth quoting here: "Apart from basic ideas concerning reward and punishment, life after death, the Messiah, redemption, and resurrection, there is hardly a commonly held belief among the Jews regarding eschatological details. This lacuna provided an obvious opportunity for free play for the imaginative, the visionary, and the superstitious."¹¹⁴

¹¹¹On the Resurrection, 58–59, lines 197–211; cf. D. Chitty, *The Letters of Saint Anthony the Great* (Oxford, 1980), 3–5, and the commentary of Rubenson, *The Letters of St. Anthony*, 71: "The body is not simply to be discarded; it can be transformed. In [Letter 1, Antony] describes how each member of the body can be purified . . . the eyes, the ears, the tongue, the hands, the belly, the sexual organs and the feet, all can become pure through the work of the mind guided by the Spirit."

¹¹²*Responsio*, chap. 7 (p. 163, lines 22–39), alluding to 2 Cor. 5:7.

¹¹³K. Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*, trans. W. V. Dych (New York, 1978), 431. Rahner is not of course addressing Byzantine theological sources, but see J. Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought* (Crestwood, N.Y., 1975), 211, who notes that Rahner's anthropology is "precisely in the line of Greek patristic tradition."

¹¹⁴G. Scholem, *Kabbalah* (Jerusalem, 1974), 333.

Much the same could be said about the Byzantines, whose central confession of faith, the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, professed only the return of Christ to “judge the living and the dead” and “expected the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come.” Emboldened by this inviting lacuna, the Byzantine *horror vacui* responded with endless conjectures and speculations.¹¹⁵ As noted above, these latter were selectively indebted to traditions and sources hallowed either by their antiquity, the prestige of their presumptive authors, or by their inclusion in an authoritative canon. But even long-established and reasonably unambiguous positions, as well as canonical texts of unimpeachable authority, were themselves subject to an ongoing hermeneutical process of reception that over time rendered them susceptible to different readings and rival interpretations.

As we have seen, the formation of Byzantine views about the afterlife was also influenced by theological corollaries implicit in liturgical practices such as the worship of the resurrected Christ, prayers and memorials for the dead, and devotion to the cult of saints and relics. Through prayer and contemplation, the various symbols of the earthly liturgy could be recognized and appropriated by thoughtful Byzantines as the exteriorized forms of the same liturgy celebrated invisibly in heaven and upon the altar of the human heart.¹¹⁶ In virtue of these iconic and macrocosmic transparencies, Byzantine eschatology exhibits profound links to the life of liturgy and prayer, and was perhaps easier for the mystic to experience than for the theologian to define. In the endless adventure of consciousness, postmortem encounters with demons and angels were but an extension of similar encounters experienced through the life of prayer *in corpore*. To descend through prayer into the crucible of the self was to risk an encounter with the demonic, the angelic, and the purifying fire of the divine. Such encounters were unavoidable at the hour of death, at which time the interior landscape of the soul was inexorably externalized and revisited as an ascent of self-discovery through the heavens. It may therefore not be wide of the mark to suggest that Byzantine eschatology is a view of the self and of ultimate things rooted in particular practices, traditions, and experiences of prayer.

In this paper I have argued for the rich diversity of Byzantine eschatology (understood as “anthropology in the future tense”), but it would be a mistake to fail to discern larger interlocking patterns within the overall carpet. Let me suggest tentatively, then, and at a fairly high level of abstraction, the presence of two schools of thought reflecting the complex double consciousness of the Byzantines with respect to their Greek and Jewish heritage. Following Jan Bremmer, we may provisionally distinguish between beliefs in a “free soul” and beliefs in a “body soul,” each differing in terms of their eschatological conjugations and corollaries. According to Bremmer, the “free soul” is a kind of active double of the human being, functionally independent of the body, and which represents the individual personality. The “body soul,” on the other hand, is the animating principle of biological life, motion, and growth, often associated with the blood and

¹¹⁵See Gregory of Nazianzos, *Oration* 27.10, who encouraged Christian thinkers to “Philosophize about . . . resurrection, about judgment, about reward . . . for in these subjects to hit the mark is not useless, and to miss it is not dangerous”; ed. P. Gallay, SC 250 (Paris, 1978), 96.

¹¹⁶For a thoughtful statement of this phenomenon, see A. Golitzin, “Liturgy and Mysticism: The Experience of God in Eastern Orthodox Christianity,” *Pro Ecclesia* 8 (1999): 159–86, and the same author’s contribution to this volume.

with various bodily organs and faculties. The “free soul” alone survived the death of the body as the active soul of the dead. Bremmer argues that the later identification of these “two souls” constitutes the modern concept of the soul, an identification advanced by Christian views of the human person as irreducibly embodied.¹¹⁷ While it is true that eschatologically reductive beliefs in a “body soul,” including the “sleep” or “death” of that soul, generally emerged within rationalist critiques of the cult of the saints, they could also claim to be a legitimate expression of the Christian tradition. At birth, a person entered the world with only body and soul, but upon baptism received the Holy Spirit as an aspect of his or her personhood and individuality. At death, the Holy Spirit returned to its source in God, while the soul (i.e., the “body soul” or “animal spirit” linked to the blood) entered a period of sleep until the day of resurrection, at which time it would be reunited with the Holy Spirit and come to new life.¹¹⁸

When these two rival traditions were brought together, they produced still further disjunctions, such as the notion of “two souls,” a duality within the self experienced as a simultaneous condition of bondage and release. The precarious interior condition of the divided self was dramatically exteriorized in the narratives of angels and demons struggling at the celestial tollgates, paralleling the systematic interrogations of the monastic confessional as well as the divided inclination of divine mercy and justice.¹¹⁹ It may also have been the case that the Byzantines’ experience of the splintering hierarchies of church and state encouraged the formation of complex and taxing metaphysical systems. At the level of narrative and rhetoric, these systems, as noted above, drew on the traditions of trial and tribulation between life and afterlife available from many strata of Greek culture, as though the one dying were a mythical hero negotiating the gates of Hades. In a monastic environment, the forgiveness or damnation of a member of the community was of the greatest importance, as the practices and exercises undertaken by that community could thereby be assessed as effective or ineffective. At the moment of death, the ascetic perceived the horror behind the possibility that even after a lifetime of struggle and the pursuit of purity, rescue was not assured. The death of the individual becomes a corporate moment as each member must reevaluate the standard to which he holds.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷Bremmer, *Concept of Soul*, 14–53 (as above, note 2),

¹¹⁸For a discussion of this question, see the studies by Krüger cited in note 69, and Origen, *Commentary on Matthew*, 57.62: “‘He will divide them in two’ (cf. Matt. 24:50), for they who have sinned are divided: one part of them is put ‘with the unfaithful’ (cf. Luke 12:46), but the part which is not from themselves ‘returns to God who gave it’ (Eccl. 12:7). . . . God will divide them in two when ‘the spirit returns to God who gave it,’ but the soul goes with its body to hell. The righteous, however, are not divided. Instead, their soul goes with their body to the heavenly kingdom”; ed. E. Klostermann and E. Benz, GCS 11 (Leipzig, 1933), p. 144. See also the epigram by Manuel Philes, “On the Resurrection,” which describes souls prior to the resurrection as “hitherto confined in their coffins, and which dwelled beside their bodies, now being freed from the shadows and the gloom, and from the stench of death therein”; cited in N. Constas, “Gregory the Theologian and a Byzantine Epigram on the Resurrection by Manuel Philes,” in *Rightly Teaching the Word of Truth*, ed. N. Vapori (Brookline, Mass., 1995), 255–56.

¹¹⁹On which see J. Carmen, *Majesty and Meekness: A Comparative Study of Contrast and Harmony in the Concept of God* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1994). Note the parallel to rabbinic traditions, in which Satan is not simply a figure of complete evil, but represents the principle of justice that brings balance to the principle of mercy; cf. P. Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen: Untersuchungen zur rabbinischen Engelvorstellung* (Berlin, 1975), 187, 222.

¹²⁰See, for example, the intense interest of a monastic community in the death of one of its members described by John Climacus, *Ladder of Divine Ascent*, 5 (“The Prison”) (PG 88:772C–73A; trans. Luibheid, 126).

Another pattern that emerged within the course of this study is what Jaroslav Pelikan has described as a critical shift from Christian idealism to Christian materialism. By the end of the late antique period, Pelikan observes the appearance of a “new Christian metaphysics and aesthetics [and a] new Christian epistemology,” adding that “by the time of the Iconoclastic controversy, the ‘Christian idealism’ that was so prominent, especially in the thought of many of the Alexandrian church fathers such as Clement and Origen, had been counterbalanced by a ‘Christian materialism.’” To this general observation, Henry Maguire has added a further nuance, noting that Iconoclasm had a withering effect on what he calls the “magical” aspects of icons. After Iconoclasm, Maguire argues, it could no longer be the material image that was itself the efficacious source of power, but rather the hypostatic presence and personal involvement and activity of the depicted saint. The posticonoclastic reconceptualization of the icon therefore placed even greater burdens on the souls of the departed saints: deprived of their magical and material props, their own souls were left to do all the work.¹²¹

The theology of the icon, of course, was part of the larger Byzantine worldview, embracing implicit and explicit concepts of human nature, the locus of the self, and the fate of the soul after death. As noted above, Byzantine theologians resisted the reduction of the human person to a mere mental entity, and endeavored to work out a conception of the self as fundamentally embodied. Inasmuch as these efforts unfolded against the backcloth of the cult of saints and relics, human identity seemed necessarily to presuppose a strong degree of spatiotemporal continuity, insuring that the individual saint continued to be the same person over time, across space, and beyond death. As a result, the mortal remains of the saints were identified with their glorious eschatological bodies. Conversely, the increasing sense of the self as irreducibly embodied added considerable weight to the experiences and moral choices of that body in what was described above as a “corporeal subjectivity,” a form of postmortem consciousness understood as a reenactment of the body’s experience.¹²²

The notion of “corporeal subjectivity” brings us in turn to yet another common thread that has run through a great many of the writers and traditions considered in this study, namely, the metaphor of death as a state of sleep and dreaming, in which the faculty of memory—a major modality of Byzantine culture—plays a pivotal role. The apparent independence of human consciousness during sleep provided the Byzantines with a helpful and universally shared experience that served as a framework for conjectures about the afterlife. In other words, the Byzantine religious imagination made use of the experience of sleep and dreams in order to organize more abstract thinking by projecting patterns from one domain of experience into another. During sleep, the body is inactive while the soul actively retains consciousness, thoughts, memories, and the capacity to have emotions. In this way, the environment of the other world was frequently held to be a kind of dream world, with mental imagery playing in the next world the role that sense perception plays in this one. “Dreams,” in the words of G. K. Chesterton, “are

¹²¹J. Pelikan, *Imago Dei: The Byzantine Apologia for Icons* (Princeton, N.J., 1990), 99, 107; H. Maguire, *The Icons of Their Bodies* (Princeton, N.J., 1996), 138–39.

¹²²On which see A. Angenendt, *Heilige und Reliquien. Die Geschichte ihres Kultes vom frühen Christentum bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich, 1994), esp. 102–22 (= “Das Doppellexistenz: Im Himmel und auf Erden”); C. Bynum, “Why All the Fuss about the Body? A Medievalist’s Perspective,” *Critical Inquiry* 22 (1995): 1–33.

like life, only more so.”¹²³ Indeed, the afterlife promised (or threatened) to be every bit as detailed and vivid as this one, and include a body-image as in dreams in this life. The world beyond the grave is a psychological and spiritual, rather than a physical, world.

The postmortem survival (and continuity) of memory and consciousness was also necessary for the punishment of the sinful, the recompense of the righteous, and, as has been noted, as a corollary to the cult of saints. Memory thus becomes the crucial and necessary means to achieve peace with the past and hope for the future. It is intriguing to note that modern science has begun to understand some of the connections between sleep, dreams, and memory. During sleep, the mind organizes and encodes the experiences of the day, a remarkable analogy to the Byzantine belief that the sleep of death is a “time” largely given over to the processes of memory and the ruminations of consciousness.

I conclude by returning to the question of Byzantine eschatology as a view of the self and of ultimate things rooted in the experiences of prayer and spirituality. Byzantine apocalyptic and eschatology was not the type that was expected to break into the world violently from without. The exteriorized apocalyptic of John’s Revelation was sealed within the only book of the Bible that was never publicly read in the Byzantine church. Instead, the Kingdom of God was a reality that promised to break through, not from a point outside the cosmos, but from within the depths of the self. It is thus no coincidence that patristic and Byzantine speculation regarding the fate of the soul after death emerged from within the narrow, tomblike confines of the monastic cell, conjured up by a class of black-garbed mourners (“blessed living corpses,” according to the *Ladder of Divine Ascent* 4) who saw themselves as having “died to the world,” and for whom the memory of death was the point of entry into life. At the very center of the *Life of Antony*, the founder of eastern monasticism teaches that: “It is good to consider the word of the Apostle: ‘I die every day’ (1 Cor. 15:31), for if we too live as though dying daily, we shall not sin. And the meaning of the saying is this: as we rise day by day we should think that we shall not abide till evening; and again, when we are about to lie down to sleep, we should think that we shall not rise up. For our life is naturally uncertain, and a gift allotted to us daily” (§19).

So much for the center. Among Antony’s last words at the conclusion of the *Life* are these: “Breathe Christ . . . and live as though dying daily” (§91; cf. §89). The Byzantine paradox of death in life, noted at the outset of this study, seems to have been an important aspect, not only of Antony’s theology of death, but of his vision of the monastic life, that is, of his mode of being in the world. From this perspective, the symbolic vocabulary of Byzantine eschatology, both in its heavenly and infernal dimensions, merges effortlessly with the symbolic vocabulary of the Byzantine ascetical and mystical life. The experience of darkness and isolation, the struggle with thoughts and memories that arise in the course of solitary confinement, the pain of sin and the pangs of conscience as a foretaste of impending damnation,¹²⁴ confrontations with the demonic, the desire to live an “angelic life,” the experience of ecstasy and of ecstatic transport, either *in corpore* or *in*

¹²³Cited in G. Stroumsa, “Dreams and Visions in Early Christian Discourse,” in *Dream Cultures: Explorations in the Comparative History of Dreaming*, ed. D. Shulman and G. Stroumsa (Oxford, 1999), 191.

¹²⁴On which see Symeon the New Theologian, *On Penitence and the Fear of God* (CWS, 254; cf. 330).

spiritu “I know not” (cf. 2 Cor. 12:2), the notion of repentance and conversion as an interiorized resurrection from the dead,¹²⁵ and the encounter with God as a purifying light, are at once the basic features of Byzantine spirituality and the basic features of the soul’s final journey to the home of another. In Byzantium, the afterlife was in many ways the inner life turned inside out and writ large upon the cosmos. The contours and dimensions of the inner world shaped the landscape of the outer world, producing an alternative world through the subjective transformation of the self.

The Byzantines had no “system” around the last things. Eschatology remained for them an open horizon within theology, an openness perhaps intended to draw experience and thought toward that which lies beyond the bounds of the world of space and time. Perhaps the very inaccessibility of the last things rendered them all the more actual and compelling; a ferment in the present order. It was not the last things that were expected to be carried over into the cosmos, but the cosmos that was called, in and through the microcosm, to be carried beyond itself, out of itself, into the mystery of God, who alone is the first thing and the last thing.

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¹²⁵Symeon the New Theologian, *The Example of Symeon the Pious* (CWS, 128–29; cf. 181, 296).